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LECTURES AND ESSAYS

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BY

SIR STAFFORD HENRY NORTHCOTE

FIRST EARL OF IDDESLEIGH

G.C.B., D.C.L., ETC.

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS

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INTRODUCTION.

In introducing these Essays to the public, a few prefatory remarks may be desirable, in explanation of the circumstances under which they were written, and of the object their author had in writing them. As a life of the late Earl of Iddesleigh is already in the course of compilation, it is unnecessary to anticipate the biographer; but the following slight sketch is subjoined, to explain the method in which each lecture or essay was prepared.

Whatever subject Lord Iddesleigh took up he thought out with great care and wrote with singular clearness, scarcely ever having occasion to erase or alter a word. He always spoke and never read his lectures: sometimes he wrote them out word for word before delivering them, at others he simply made notes of the points he intended to take up. They were mostly given at the Exeter Literary Society,

and kindred societies or institutes in neighbouring towns, and not at the great centres of literary activity. A selection only follows, as, in addition to those given in this volume, he has left essays on Schools of Art, Middle-Class Education, Schools of Design, the Principles of Punishment, the Relations of Theory and Practice, the Advantages of Literature, the Science of Reasoning, Statistics, Centralisation in France, Heraldry, the Opening of the Suez Canal, &c. Some of these were written before education was as widely diffused as it is now, and therefore the thoughts may seem out of date, as the subjects had not then received the consideration which has since been paid to them, and were decidedly less generally studied than they are now.

In the education of all classes Lord Iddesleigh took a very earnest and lively interest. From the reformatory school on his own property, in which in past times he frequently taught, and through all the shades and gradations of village and middle-class schools, schools of art and design, mechanics' institutes, &c., up to the great public schools and universities, there was no educational movement in which he had not a deep sympathy and an active share. As far back as 1848 and 1849, he had been employed by the Government to visit the great manufacturing towns, as Bir-

mingham, Manchester, Glasgow, Edinburgh, with the view of establishing and promoting schools of design in every great emporium of commerce and trade. With Mr Barwick Baker, M. de Metz, and Miss Carpenter, he was united in the earliest efforts made to found reformatory and industrial schools, and later served with Lord Clarendon on the Public Schools Commission.

His attention and interest being thus constantly called to all that could increase and develop the social and religious cultivation of his fellow-countrymen, Lord Iddesleigh was willing to contribute not only his serious work on these various Education Commissions, but also his humble efforts as a lecturer. That he did not place any undue importance on the value of such addresses as a means of diffusing knowledge, may be seen by a letter to a friend, dated 1856, in which, after thanking the friend for a lecture enclosed in the letter, Lord Iddesleigh adds: "I do not undervalue the gratification and the general good derived from isolated lectures upon miscellaneous subjects; no doubt they enable an audience to pass an evening rationally and pleasantly, and they occasionally set some on inquiries which are likely to lead to good. But our associations ought to aim at more than this, and to set on foot regular class instruction in the more important

branches of knowledge." Some of these pieces have already appeared in print, owing to the action of friends who, being present at their delivery, and impressed favourably by them, wished to give them a wider circulation, but they were never printed at Lord Iddesleigh's instance or suggestion. Some are taken from newspaper reports, and are naturally, therefore, defective and incomplete, or, in some passages, not expressed with the ease and clearness which characterised Lord Iddesleigh's usual style. The poems and lighter pieces were merely written for passing amusement, and without the slightest idea on Lord Iddesleigh's part of their ever being published, and his widow only hopes that she does his memory no wrong in thus presenting them to the public.

Upton Pyne Parsonage,
May 1887.

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LECTURES AND ESSAYS.

I.

DO STATES, LIKE INDIVIDUALS, INEVITABLY TEND, AFTER A PERIOD OF MATURITY, TO DECAY?

WITH regard to this Essay, which was written for the English prize at Oxford, we find mention of it in the following letter addressed by Stafford Henry Northcote to the Venerable Archdeacon Shirley, Shirley Vicarage, Derby, who was afterwards Bishop of Sodor and Man. Mr Northcote had passed some months with Archdeacon Shirley as a pupil, after he had left Eton and before he went to Oxford.

"MIDDLE TEMPLE, *March* 21, 1840.

"MY DEAR SIR,—It seems to me a long time since I wrote to you or heard anything of you; at all events, a necessity for being idle for five minutes, and the facility of the penny post, are quite sufficient reasons for my beginning a letter to you. If place have anything to do with composition, I fear this production will be

none of the most amusing, for I am writing from my desk in the very penetralia of the Temple, in a Special Pleader's chamber. On Monday I am to take possession of my town residence, which is situate at 58 Lincoln's Inn Fields, and is a very pleasant one. Till then I am staying at my grandfather's at Roehampton, and come in here every day to work. I am beginning to feel interested in law, but do not as yet make very surprising progress, and the number of pupils who are reading in these chambers is rather productive of idleness than hard work. We are not indulged with very lengthy or frequent vacations, the only legitimate one being from the 10th August to the 20th October. However, I think I shall take a few weeks at Christmas. I have been at Oxford lately to keep my M.A. term, and have now pretty nearly bid adieu to that ancient seat of learning, after a long deliberation whether I should stand for a fellowship anywhere, which I have at last made up my mind not to do.

"I am writing for the English essay this year, though with barely the shadow of a chance, not having begun till very late, and having a formidable rival in Stanley, the *élite* of Rugby and the Latin essayist last year. The subject is, 'Do states, like individuals, inevitably tend, after a period of maturity, to decay?'

"Now I must conclude; therefore with kind remembrances to Mrs Shirley and yourself, I remain, yours very affectionately,

"STAFFORD H. NORTHCOTE."

Ἔσσεται ἦμαρ ὅτ' ἄν ποτ' ὀλώλῃ Ἴλιος ἱρή.

WHATEVER may be the feelings of admiration or wonder with which the sight of any of the great and beautiful productions of Nature may inspire us; however we may associate them in our minds with the ideas of fitness and propriety, or of grandeur and magnificence, yet we can never divest ourselves of the recollection that all these things are but for a season,

—that their days are numbered; and that although the period of their duration may be long as compared with our own brief span of existence, it is but as a moment in the boundless region of eternity. "I weep," said the Persian monarch, when reviewing the most splendid and mightiest army that Asia had ever produced—"I weep to think that in a hundred years not one of these myriads will remain." And well may we echo and dwell upon his exclamation. Generation after generation has been swept away by the great destroyer, Time; and if their works have remained a little longer, as a memorial of their former greatness, yet have even these soon been overwhelmed in the common wreck; while the few scattered remains which have hitherto been preserved to us—the massive stones of the pyramid, or the yet more precious productions of human intellect—serve but to enhance our regret for our loss, and to prove more clearly the unsparing character of the universal doom which awaits both man and his labours. The waters of the river are carried away and succeeded by fresh ones; new trees spring up to replace the ancient forests, which are gradually, but continually, wearing away; the very ocean is ever parting with its floods, and receiving new augmentations: so man, also, succeeds man; city rises upon the ruins of city; one state is powerful to-day, another has replaced it to-morrow! So regular, so uniform has this progress hitherto been, that we cannot doubt that it is universal. Surely, when in-

stitutions so different, lines of policy so opposite, elements and causes of greatness so distinct, as those which the page of history continually presents to our notice, have all been observed to tend—some in one way, some in another—towards the same unvaried conclusion, we cannot but recognise in this striking similarity, where all else appears so different, the workings of some deeper and more general principle of decay than is to be found merely in the particular defects of each separate constitution, or the peculiar manners and habits of each individual people. It is easy to say that one state perished through luxury; another, by the insubordination of its military; a third, by the dissensions of its provinces; that here a despot arose to crush the vigour of the republic; that there the feuds of two ambitious nobles rent it in twain, or the turbulence of an excited populace disordered the machinery and broke the springs of government: just as it is easy to say of individuals, that one was killed by intemperance, another by accident, another by famine, and another by disease. All this may be very true; and yet there is a further principle behind — a principle which operates equally in all, though the forms which it wears in each may be widely different. "It is appointed to all men to die." So, too, it is appointed to all institutions of men—to all kingdoms, and thrones, and dominations, and powers, however great they may be upon earth,—all must perish. There is but one kingdom which shall

stand for ever—"the kingdom cut out without hands." So then, as well might an individual hope to escape death by providing against all the various forms under which it has hitherto appeared, as a state expect to secure to itself perpetuity by guarding against the faults which seem to have proved fatal to its several predecessors.

Not that we should set at nought the benefits to be derived from a careful examination of the causes which have hastened or delayed the fall of other nations because we too must fall; as neither should men neglect to study what promotes the health or injures the body because all must die: either course would be alike deserving of blame; and he alone is truly wise who shuns whatever has been found to bring with it premature destruction, and who, fully aware of the sure end which awaits him, endeavours to make the inevitable change as distant and as gentle as possible. It is for the same reason that we should often look back upon the history of early times; that we should study the beauties, the faults, the remarkable points, of the best known states; and that, from the manner in which each of these was at length destroyed, we should gather what is that constitution whose decay is likely to be the most easy, and its fall the most free from suffering.

If, then, there is one truth which above all others is prominent and remarkable before all the phenomena which the page of history lays before us, it is this,—

He who disposeth of power as He will, who "ruleth in the kingdom of men," who "setteth up one and putteth down another," has ever been pleased, for wise, but to us unfathomable purposes, to raise up, from time to time, some one nation to a high and exalted rank above all the earth, to be, as it were, His vicegerent here, and has intrusted to it some mighty work to be performed, and honour and glory and dominion that it may be able to perform it. Such have still been His dealings since the foundation of the world; yet, lest man should be puffed up and exalted beyond measure—lest he should say with Nebuchadnezzar, "By the might of *my* power, and for the honour of *my* majesty"—He has wonderfully ordained that increase of power and greatness shall always and of itself, as it were, bring with it unavoidable ruin to the state where it is found; and that the very success which is raising the nation in the eyes of the world shall be ever, in effect, working its destruction. It is not to the sea alone that He saith, "Thus far shalt thou come, and no further;" human greatness, too, has its bounds, which it can never pass.

One state after another has raised itself into supremacy—one after another has sunk into oblivion; their courses have been different, but there is a similarity in their very differences. One has sprung up, as it were, in a night—it has perished also in a night; another has been slow and almost imperceptible in its rise—and so in its decay it has been long in falling.

This has been raised by the power of its arms; it has fallen through the insolence of its soldiery: that has owed its success to the virtue and patriotism of its lower orders; it has owed its fall also to their corruption. Each has risen by the force and excellence of a different principle; in each has the very success of that principle been the cause of its eventual ruin. That government, then, will be the most secure, which combines within itself the greatest number of different principles, if skilfully blended together, so that one may ever form a check upon the rest, and the balance of power be preserved between all.

It must be evident to all that those kinds of government which we usually call pure, are, in truth, but rarely found, and can never, while human nature remains unaltered, be fitted for the preservation and wellbeing of any state. Could we, indeed, imagine a country where all were influenced by a respect for the laws, by a love of virtue, and by the dictates of religion, how beautiful would any of the pure forms of government be! What patriotism would there be in a democracy! what wisdom in an aristocracy! what strength and harmony in a monarchy! It might seem a matter of little consequence which of them were adopted. But as the case stands, it is worse than idle to expatiate upon their several excellences, which must ever remain to us a mere subject of speculation. Reason suggests, experience confirms the observation, that a pure form of government can seldom exist, and,

perhaps, can never really prosper. Few of the most celebrated constitutions of antiquity can be classed under any of the forms which their writers on politics laid down; and of those which most nearly approached to any pure form of government we cannot but remark, that their rise and fall have been the most rapid, and their period of greatness the briefest of any. It is from the well-tempered constitutions of Rome and Sparta that we expect a slow but steady progress towards dominion, and a persevering spirit, often meeting with rebuffs, yet nevertheless tending ever towards its one great end, and laying the foundations of a power calculated to withstand the inroads of decay for a much longer period than those brilliant but short-lived states, which, deriving their strength from the vigorous exertions of the people, or the genius and ambition of the sovereign, press forward in the career of glory with irresistible violence, overturning every obstacle, regardless of every danger, sweeping all before them with the impetuosity of a wintry torrent; and then, like that same torrent, when the immediate influence of rain and tempest has passed away, sinking into obscurity as suddenly as they rose into consequence. But different as may be the period of greatness in these two classes of states, the end of both is the same; and the full noiseless river and the rapid sparkling torrent will alike lose themselves in the boundless ocean of eternity.

Whilst, therefore, we doubt the practicability of any of those kinds of government which alone were recognised as its legitimate forms by the theorists of antiquity, we must not neglect briefly to touch upon the principle of decay contained in each of them; especially since we may observe that the fall of most mixed constitutions has been owing to the gradual rise and undue ascendancy of some one of these elements; and that in tracing the causes of the decline of Rome, of Sparta, or of Persia, we shall for the most part be only following out and marking the course of the natural decay of a monarchy, a democracy, an aristocracy, or whichever form these several states eventually assumed.

Let us, then, begin with democracy; and in order the more clearly to perceive the ultimate tendency of this form of government, let us take as an example of its working the history of Athens after the Persian invasion, from the fall of the Areopagus and the era of Pericles to the close of the Peloponnesian war—a period decidedly the most remarkable in her career, commencing under the most brilliant auspices, crowded with the most important events, and furnishing posterity with the most useful lessons; for now the events of the Persian war, and the activity and enterprise produced by its happy termination, had placed Athens in a truly proud and exalted position. During the whole of that glorious struggle there had existed a continual rivalry between the aristocratic and the

democratic parties, each labouring to be foremost in the service of their country. National greatness was the necessary result of so noble an emulation. Themistocles had preserved his country, and had given her the command of a new element, which was thenceforth to be the scene of her dominion. Aristides and Cimon, by their prudence and liberality, had raised her to the chief rank of Grecian states, and had placed her on a level even with Sparta herself. Thus far all was well: and could the balance of parties have been preserved, the fortunes of Athens might have been very different,—equally glorious, but more durable. But it is in such a case as this that we perceive the want of a third principle, which may hold the balance between the two others. There was none such in Athens: this was the main defect of Solon's constitution. Aristocracy and democracy were left to fight out their own quarrel. From a number of circumstances, which we need not here particularise, the latter was successful; and the natural result was, the almost total extirpation of the former. Then began the era of Pericles: the star of democracy was in the ascendant; the people were all in all. The state, too, was flourishing: it had recovered from the effects of the Persian invasion; it was at the head of a powerful body of allies, or rather subjects; it had the command of the sea; it had able generals and great statesmen. Everything seemed to prosper with it; it ventured to cope with the greatest power in Greece;

it put forth its strength in a manner almost incredible. We look with wonder and admiration at the activity, the endurance, the sagacity, the resources of this little state; and we cannot but exclaim, If this be democracy, how great, how glorious, how wonderful it is! how superior to the cautious and timid spirit of its rival, aristocracy! Truly, Athens was great; and she owed her greatness to her democratic government. But let us look a little further on; let us seek for Athens after a lapse of but seven-and-twenty years, and behold her then, dismantled, enfeebled, crushed almost to the earth, overwhelmed, as it were, for ever!—such is democracy!

Such is democracy; for whenever any great success is owing mainly to the exertions of the populace, it will speedily follow that they will be so swollen with pride and arrogance as no longer to brook restraint. And as Athens learnt in her prosperity to spurn the authority of her magistrates and the wisdom of her elders, and threw herself headlong into the arms of demagogues, who ruined her constitution and her independence, so will every popular government be led on step by step in external strength and internal decay, until at last the same fatal results ensue; for when once the spirit of "extreme equality," as M. Montesquieu terms it, has crept in, all is confusion and disorder; the people are no longer content with choosing their magistrates (which is their just and legitimate privilege in a democracy), they desire to be

magistrates themselves; they endeavour to usurp the offices of magistrate, senator, judge, general; everything is swallowed up in the people. The support of a democracy is its virtue; but in such a state of things virtue speedily perishes, for experience shows that they who cannot submit to public restraint, and who throw off respect for the magistrate and the judge, will not long endure the authority of elders, of parents, or of masters in private life; and the whole state will shortly present a deplorable scene of anarchy and licentiousness. Whether such was not the case at Athens let the reader of Aristophanes answer.

Let us next turn to the aristocratic form of government, or that in which the supreme power is vested in a small body of men, selected either from certain privileged families, or on account of their superior virtue, or their wealth. There are, perhaps, few theories of government more plausible than that in which the management of affairs is supposed to be committed to the best and wisest of the citizens, while it is at the same time one of the least practicable of any; for in order to secure the selection of such citizens it will be necessary to assign the office of choosing them either to the people, in which case the government in effect approaches to a democracy—or else to the rulers themselves, which involves the danger of their choosing men likely to promote the interests of their own body rather than those of the commonwealth. An aristocracy of wealth, again, is

manifestly a bad institution; for we can never consider it advisable that any man who shall have amassed, by whatsoever means, a certain quantity of money, should thereupon immediately and without further qualification be admitted to a share in the supreme power, especially as the fruits of a life spent in accumulating wealth are by no means likely to be wisdom and virtue, but too often avarice and narrow-mindedness, or luxury and profusion. Finally, a hereditary aristocracy combines several advantages with many disadvantages; for the impassable gulf placed between the nobles and the commons will ever raise the arrogance of the one and the envy and hatred of the other. A hereditary aristocracy is excellent in a mixed constitution, but it cannot stand alone. The main support of an aristocracy is in the virtue and the moderation of the nobles, whose aim it should be to strengthen as much as possible their real power, and to extend their authority over the commons, without appearing to make any marked distinction between the two classes in those unimportant and trifling marks of respect which are more eagerly sought after by the multitude than real power. Nothing could be more unwise than such laws as that of Roscius Otho, at Rome, and others of a similar description, especially in a state governed by a hereditary nobility; for then the people are for ever reminded of the hopeless inferiority of their condition to that of men whom nothing but the accident of

birth had placed above them. It should seem that the overthrow of the Bacchiadæ, at Corinth, was the result of their exclusive reservation to themselves of all the privileges of the state.

On the whole, there appear to be two reasons which prevent an aristocracy standing securely by itself. In the first place, there is the great danger of the commons being in time roused to claim a share in the privileges of the nobles, and effecting a revolution, which in such states is usually of a peculiarly bloody character. Secondly, there is the probability of feuds arising between the nobles themselves, when those who are already so high cannot be content without becoming yet higher, and to gratify their own private jealousy and ambition, plunge their country into all the horrors of a civil war, like those of Sylla and Marius, Cæsar and Pompey, Octavius and Antony.

It remains now to speak of monarchy, which, of all the pure forms of government, appears infinitely the most natural and the most practicable. Yet even this is not suited for our present depraved condition. There are two dangers in a monarchical form of government; the first, that the king will become corrupt, and govern according to caprice and the suggestion of favourites rather than according to law; the other, that the people will by degrees lose their respect for the kingly office, deeply as such respect is implanted by nature in every heart. A monarchy without gra-

dations of rank must soon fall, by the operation of one of these two causes; with such gradations, it is greatly strengthened, but it then assumes more of the nature of a mixed constitution.

Such are the three forms of government laid down by ancient writers as the only legitimate constitutions. We have seen that each of them contains a principle of decay; and we may further remark, that the moment when this principle is most likely to be developed is that at which the state is prosperous in its external relations and elated by recent success. The proverb, Ἀρχὴ τὸν ἄνδρα δείξει is equally true with regard to states. When they are flourishing externally, then is their internal solidity put to the test; then are the faults of their constitution brought to light. The ruling power, whether king, nobles, or commons, is exalted too much, and becomes haughty and insolent, so that the state is either destroyed at once by its rulers, or soon after by the reaction naturally created by their arrogance. The same will also be in some degree the case even in a mixed constitution; but this will have one great advantage, that the arrogance and overbearing of any one element may, and in some measure must, be checked and counterbalanced by the rest. The fall, therefore, of such a state will be slower and more gentle; for it will be necessary, in the first place, that one of its component parts should gain an undue ascendancy over the others before it can accomplish the ruin of the whole; and

this process will be more or less rapid according to the skill with which the various elements are tempered and blended together. And in these forms of government there remains a hope, even in the most troublous times, of eventually recovering their original strength and firmness after a period of depression. Such, at least, was the case with our own constitution after it had been to all appearance overthrown at the time of the Great Rebellion, when democracy for a season overwhelmed and oppressed the elements of monarchy and aristocracy, and proceeded to erect itself into a military tyranny, until, after the great mainspring of its power had been withdrawn at the death of Cromwell, a strong reaction took place on the part of those branches of the constitution which had been, for a time, put out of sight, but not wholly eradicated, and which at length recovering their due influence at the restoration of the Royal family, in great measure obliterated the traces of the late violent and dangerous disorders. Not that such a happy recovery is to be looked for as a common and natural occurrence in a mixed form of government, but rather as a striking and singular instance of the strength which may exist in such governments, and, perhaps, still more of the peculiar skill which is manifested in the construction of our own. It will far more frequently happen that the inordinate power of any one branch of a mixed constitution will, in a short time, reduce the whole state to the most deplorable and

irretrievable disorder, poverty, and weakness. That such is the usual course of events, a careful consideration of the rise and fall of the most celebrated nations of antiquity, and the history of more modern kingdoms, will sufficiently demonstrate; and since it is next to impossible to reduce the mixed forms of government to distinct classes, as may be done with the pure forms, because scarcely any two are composed in a precisely similar manner, it will be as well briefly to recur to the histories of such countries as are most worthy of our attention, and, by observing such circumstances in their several fortunes as bear upon our present subject, to endeavour to establish the truth of our position, that every one—ay, even the most solid—contains in itself a principle which must sooner or later be developed in each, and whose effects are eventual decay and ruin.

Of the history of some of the earliest kingdoms which rose into consequence among their neighbours we hardly know enough to enable us to pronounce what were the causes either of their greatness or their fall. We have, indeed, a vague idea of their power and extent, of their wealth and luxury and splendour; but the mist of antiquity hangs over them, and although we may discern the grandeur of their form, and a few of its principal outlines, yet it is impossible to discover those minuter touches which are, perhaps, the most important of any. Thus we have a general conception of the majesty of Assyria and

Babylon; we hear of their power, their magnificence, and their wealth; we see, further, that after a period of dominion they fell before the arms of Persia;—but we cannot distinctly trace the steps by which they must gradually have declined, nor the causes which at length rendered them an easy prey to their ancient tributaries. Of Egypt, again, we must never cease to regret that we know so little. What may have been the precise extent of her sway we are ignorant; but it seems probable that the conquests of Sesostris embraced many nations, and the subsequent rivalry between her and Assyria, which we find subsisting during a long space of time, tends to show that her power was by no means contemptible. But it is chiefly as the mother of the arts and sciences that we reverence Egypt. There is scarcely an invention which does not connect itself with her; literature, geography, astronomy, and many, many other sciences are her offspring. From her, Greece derived her civilisation, her religion, her literature; and if we seek further tokens of her advance in the arts, of her boundless wealth, of her vast conceptions of the sublime, let us not trust merely to the traditions of antiquity—let us go ourselves and visit her after a lapse of three or four thousand years, and, amidst the monuments which still remain of her ancient splendour, let us ask ourselves whether the tales of her olden time are indeed mere fictions, and not rather slight and inadequate attempts to shadow forth and perpetuate

in some slight degree the memory of her real and surprising greatness.

The fate of Egypt is one well deserving our attention. She of all the nations of antiquity is the one which most excites our curiosity by the stupendous records of her former greatness which we yet possess. She, too, of all the great nations of antiquity, is the one which has played the most insignificant part in the theatre of the world from the time of her falling under the yoke of Persia up to the present moment. Notwithstanding her manifold advantages of situation and climate and ancient renown, Egypt has been successively the slave of Persia, of Macedon, of Rome, and of Turkey, as though her name had been for ever blotted out from the catalogue of free nations. Let us see whether her previous history will account for so striking a degradation. As long as the two ruling castes, the military and the sacerdotal, were on an equal footing with each other, so long Egypt progressed alike in arts and arms, in external power and internal civilisation; but when the priestly caste gained the ascendancy, and the honour of the native soldiery received two heavy blows from Sethon and Psammitichus, the power of Egypt began rapidly to decline; and though the conflict of the great powers of Asia among themselves prevented any immediate invasion of the country, yet the ill success of Nechos and the defeat of Apries by the Cyrenians, were fearful omens of the fate which awaited Psammenitus, when the

fortune of one battle, in which the Grecian mercenaries were defeated, gave up the whole country to the victorious arms of Cambyses. From that time to the present, the history of Egypt, with the exception of a few trifling insurrections, has been almost a blank; nor have her sons, proverbially subject to the most degrading superstitions, ever shaken off the traces of that priestly tyranny which appears to have been the main cause of their overthrow.

From Egypt let us turn to its conqueror, Persia; and here we shall have a very striking example of the mutability of human greatness, and of the evils naturally attending too wide an extent of dominion. The rise and progress of the Persian power under its two first sovereigns was incredibly rapid. Media, Lydia, Babylon, and Egypt became in a few years the prey of this lately insignificant province. But during this period of conquest little was done towards cementing and consolidating the heterogeneous mass of nations thus blended together. A state so continually engaged in wars as Persia was under Cyrus and Cambyses, naturally follows the guidance and obeys the dictates of its victorious general, being, in fact, more of an army than a kingdom. But this is a state of things which cannot last long; and accordingly, in the history of Persia, we soon find a new principle substituted for that of general conquest. Darius, the greatest of her monarchs, aimed rather at establishing an empire than at overrunning nation after nation,

and he therefore began to regulate and settle the government of those territories which his predecessors had bequeathed to him. The task was one of no small difficulty; and perhaps, in an empire so large, and at the same time so little united, as that of Persia, and at a moment in which there were so many wealthy and powerful nobles who might prove dangerous rivals to his newly acquired supremacy, the only form of government which he could safely establish was that of satraps, appointed by the Crown to command some particular province, and to collect the tribute imposed upon it for the royal treasury. Yet in so wide a dominion, the evils consequent upon this arrangement were most serious, and ere long proved fatal to the safety of the whole. Removed from the immediate superintendence and control of the king, intrusted with vast treasures and large standing armies, and fearless of punishment so long as they continued to preserve a show of allegiance, and to remit the required tribute to Susa, the several satraps, disregarding the welfare of their sovereign, boldly aimed at their own aggrandisement. From the very earliest times of their appointment, even in the reign of Darius himself, these bad effects of the system were but too apparent. The machinations of Aryandes in Egypt, and Orœtes in Sardis, and the terror excited by Histiæus in Thrace, were early omens of the future workings of this pernicious form of government, which afterwards so fully developed themselves that it would

be difficult to point out a single period, from the reign of Darius Hystaspes to that of the unfortunate Codomannus, at which there was not at least one rebellious satrap to be punished, or two who were employing the armies and draining the treasury of their common master in prosecuting their own private quarrels with each other. The necessity, therefore, of adopting so evil a form of government, was one of the bad consequences of the over-greatness of Persia. Another great disadvantage which this over-greatness entailed upon her was this, that of the thousand tribes which formed her armies, many were far more hostile to their friends than to their foes; nor could the slight bond of union, created by their subjection to one common master, and their embarkation in one common cause, suffice to obliterate the traces of many an ancient feud, and perhaps of even recent contention. It could scarcely be expected that any great cordiality should exist at Artemisium and Salamis, between the Ionians and the Phœnicians, so lately arrayed against each other at Lade and Cyprus. And still more fatal were the consequences of a similar national jealousy, coupled with the rivalry of neighbouring satraps, in those later times when Agesilaus and Alexander, with their small but united bands, overcame, with scarcely a struggle, the countless hosts of the monarchy.

It is the remark of a deep and sagacious writer,[1]

[1] Montesquieu, Sp. L. viii. c. 20.

that a small state should be governed as a republic, a moderate one as a monarchy, and a large one as a despotism. Persia had overstepped the limits which are fitting for a monarchical form of government. Hence her weakness and decay. Never was there a more striking instance of a state falling by its own over-greatness than that which is here presented to us. All Asia seemed tranquil; nothing in Europe was strong enough to affect the mighty fabric; the world was at peace: when of a sudden the seeds of discord began to work, and the empire to crumble, as of its own accord. In less than twenty years, a large portion had been rent from it, and the pride of its power had been humbled, by two or three little cities, whose very names had scarcely penetrated to the ears of the monarch of Susa. From that time, the authority of Persia had departed. Her appearance, indeed, was not much altered, but she was but the shadow of her former self, and from day to day her core was becoming more rotten, until at the first vigorous assault of a foreign power, the whole fell to pieces almost without the necessity of conquest.

Here, then, we see the fatal effects of a monarchy extending itself beyond its natural limits. Let us next take the case of a republic, which, according to the writer lately quoted, ought to be content with a small territory. The two which naturally and immediately present themselves for our consideration are Athens and Sparta; and the different lines of policy

pursued by these two celebrated states, and the different fate of each, will afford us a very interesting lesson. Of Athens we have already spoken as furnishing us with the best example of a pure democracy, raised by the exertions of the people, and overthrown by their unbridled arrogance and contempt for authority. We must now think of Athens as a little barren state of apparently small importance, but possessed of a navy which rendered her mistress of large and wealthy countries, of vast resources, and numerous subjects. In Athens, we have the case of a conquering republic; and the evils of such a spirit are to be found as well in this case as in that of monarchy, lately mentioned. The policy of Aristides and Cimon had been that of true and liberal patriots; they desired to unite and aggrandise Greece, and, if possible, to place Athens in the foremost rank of her republics. They succeeded in so doing. They formed a confederacy, embracing the greater part of the Grecian states; and they raised Athens to its head, not as a mistress, but a leader. Then came in the popular party, who could see no glory in so wise and enlightened a scheme. They with characteristic selfishness aimed at being the rulers, not the leaders, of Greece. Soon were the confederates reduced to the rank of subjects; the common fund changed into a tribute to Athens; and if any little power attempted to assert its undoubted rights, the tyrant hand of Athens was ever ready to silence its factious murmurs, and to

punish them severely. Great, then, were the resources with which Athens began the Peloponnesian war, and just was the confidence which Pericles entertained of her ability to resist the power of Sparta. Nor can we doubt what would have been the event of that war had his advice been implicitly followed. But even had all succeeded as he hoped—had Sparta been humbled, and Athens placed upon the highest pinnacle of her wished-for greatness—the seeds which he, above all others, had sown, must ere long have begun to show themselves, and the greatness of her success would but have rendered her fall the more fearful. That grasping spirit which, even in the midst of danger, she so wonderfully displayed, must speedily have worked her ruin, and the passions of her subjects would but have been the more inflamed, and their revenge therefore the more deadly. Indeed, the Athenians seem to have been aware[1] that the success of Sparta was far less to be dreaded than that of their own allies, should these ever be in a condition to turn upon them.

Rome and Athens had each a body of allies, or subjects, greatly exceeding in number their own domestic force. The former was eventually ruined by admitting too many of these to her franchise; the latter, by excluding all too strictly from even the show of freedom. But what a contrast does the faithful conduct of the Roman allies and colonies, previous

[1] Thucydides, Book v. c. 91.

to their admisssion to the franchise, and during the invasion of Hannibal, present to that of Mitylene, Scione, Chios, and the hundred tributaries of Athens, whenever a safe opportunity of revolting to her rival presented itself!

Such was the conduct of Athens. Let us contrast with it the policy of Sparta,—a state whose wise and salutary laws forbade the acquisition of foreign dominions, and confined the people to the limits of their own country. There is but little to admire in the behaviour of the Spartans during the Peloponnesian war: there are, perhaps, as many and as flagrant instances of cruelty and injustice on their side as on that of their rivals; while their slow and cautious movements are infinitely less attractive than the rapid and brilliant successes of Athens. Yet still, throughout the war, in spite of their manifold breaches of faith, and their culpable neglect of their allies, whether in prosperity or adversity, in overweening confidence or needless despair, we find the Lacedæmonians ever looked upon as that which they described themselves to be, as the liberators of Greece, the assertors of freedom, the champions of the oppressed subjects of Athens. Why is this? Because they aimed not at conquest. They did not even desire to destroy Athens when it was in their power; their object was not to unite Greece into one empire, but to keep it as heretofore divided, and themselves to occupy only the proud rank of its first free state.

Athens was a conquering republic, and she fell in consequence of her conquests. Sparta was bound by her principles not to conquer, and as long as she kept to those principles she remained entire. But the ambition of Athens proved fatal to others as well as herself. It communicated itself even to her rival, who shortly after the close of the war began to depart from those principles which had hitherto been her main support; and although the change, being less rapid, was not so immediately destructive, still there can be no doubt that it was one great cause of her eventual decay. The successes of Agesilaus in Asia, glorious as they were, yet tended greatly to corrupt the boasted simplicity of Spartan manners, by introducing wealth and luxury into the state. But there were other causes, too, at work, which combined to overthrow the republic, strong as was the foundation on which it stood. The great defect of the Spartan constitution was the limiting the aristocracy to those of Dorian blood, without leaving any other road open to the honours of the state; so that the insensible decrease of the genuine Spartan families, coupled with the overweening power of the Ephori, eventually reduced the government almost to an oligarchy—both the kings and the commons being in course of time neglected; so that when Agis and Cleomenes, in later times, endeavoured to restore the laws of Lycurgus, their wise and patriotic measures were thwarted by the selfish opposition of the Ephori,

conscious of the undue share of wealth and power which they had, contrary to those laws, usurped.

We have not time to dwell long upon the causes which led to the fall of that extraordinary dominion which was established by the conquests of Alexander. It must be evident to all that the two principal reasons of its decay are to be found, first, in its great extent, which made it ungovernable, except by the mighty spirit of its founder; and, secondly, in the want of virtue among his generals, each of whom preferred his own separate interest to the public good. As, then, this empire was established by military superiority, so it fell by military discord; for though we would not represent Alexander merely as a victorious general, but rather as a wise and far-sighted monarch, yet he had not lived long enough to substitute a civil form of government for that which was at first necessary, a military authority. Hence his several chiefs had too much power in their hands at his death.

We must also pass rapidly over the revolutions of Carthage, although the celebrity of its form of government, as well as the great prosperity of the state, renders it an object of great interest to us, and makes us regret that we have such meagre records of its history. It appears to have risen principally by commerce, and to have extended its discoveries and dominions into remote parts of the world; but its wealth and prosperity seem to have prepared it for its ruin,

since money became the sole passport to honours, and the extortions and corruption of the magistrates soon grew to such a height, that when Hannibal, with true patriotism, endeavoured to remedy them, they delivered their own greatest hero and best citizen to their hereditary enemies, the Romans. Can we, after such a dereliction of virtue, wonder that Carthage speedily fell an easy prey to her foes?

But let us now turn to a consideration of the causes which led to the decay of that most wonderful of all the states of antiquity, in whose wide and powerful current all the lesser streams of the ancient world were absorbed—which rolled on with daily and hourly increase, in an apparently endless and unebbing flood; that state from which the kingdoms of modern times have their origin, and, in great measure, their laws and constitutions also; that state, which of all others seemed the most unlikely to fall under foreign invasion, but which did at last yield to the incursions of tribes whom it must have held in utter contempt, if, indeed, their names ever reached its ears; that state whose origin was so small, whose rise was so rapid, whose greatness filled the earth, whose fall shook the nations, whose remains are, even now, an unexhausted and inexhaustible source of wonder and of interest,—the eternal city—imperial Rome.

In whichever of her various steps towards greatness we contemplate Rome, whether in her limited state under the early kings, or in her contests with

the greater provinces of Italy under the nobles, and during their struggles with the increasing power of the commonalty, or lastly, in her extended conquests and great foreign triumphs, under that mixed form of government which she gradually acquired, we may still perceive, at each and all of these stages, the same spirit and firmness, the workings of the same principles, which, variously and yet uniformly developed under these several forms of government, tended to place Rome on that pinnacle of greatness for which she was destined by Providence. The history of Rome is the best possible illustration of a remark of M. Montesquieu, that so long as the principles of a state are untouched, the alterations of the peculiar form of its constitution affect it but little; but that when the principles are once destroyed, the very slightest change proves fatal.

Many and great were the revolutions which took place in Rome during her rise. The changes of the constitution under her several kings; the subversion of monarchy, and the establishment of aristocracy; the recognition of a popular element of government in the election of tribunes; the rise and fall of the decemvirate; the admission of plebeians into the highest offices of state,—these and many other equally important changes, which in later times would have shaken the whole fabric of the empire to its very base, were but productive of new vigour in the yet prosperous republic, which, with a steady and uniform

course, was achieving a way to the summit of earthly power and magnificence, undaunted by difficulties, unwearied by toils, striving ever to be first among nations, be its domestic government what it might. Contrast with this the wonderful and almost incredible effects produced by the most insignificant changes at a time when the virtue and internal vigour of the republic had departed. As early as the times of the Gracchi, the step of removing the judicial power from the senators to the knights was the origin of evil not to have been expected; and much more did this evil spread and extend itself when Sylla restored the power to the senators, and subsequent demagogues strove again to deprive them of it. Corruption was at the root, and the least change was fearfully important.

According to M. Montesquieu, the fall of Rome was owing to two causes: first, the necessity of keeping large armies in the distant provinces—and, secondly, the admission of the Italian states to the freedom of the city; or, in other words, Rome was ruined partly by the over-greatness of the empire, and partly by the over-greatness of the city. These two causes, operating together, were productive of incalculable mischief; for while an ambitious general could render himself formidable to his country by establishing himself in a remote province, he could at the same time forward his interests in the city itself by the introduction of large masses of the country population,

who would vote at his bidding, and, if necessary, would use violence in passing any of his measures. Thus, the fall of Rome, commencing in the civil wars of Marius and Sylla, rapidly progressed during the periods of the two triumvirates and their attendant discords, till it was at length arrested by the strong hand and absolute authority of Augustus. From that time the character of the empire was changed, and an end was put to the causes which had hitherto been at work; yet the fundamental root of all the evil remained untouched, and even the power of a despot could not avail to preserve so vast a fabric entire. Augustus perceived the danger of adding to dominions already too extensive; and the line of policy which he recommended to his successor was for some time adopted by subsequent emperors. But it was too late to forbid further conquests while those already made were so enormous. The provincial governors began to feel at once their strength and their insecurity; hence they courted the affections of their soldiers by corrupting their morals and relaxing their discipline; till, after a few reigns, the empire was reduced to a deplorable state of military tyranny, in which the prætorian cohorts openly disposed of the purple to the highest bidder. By degrees, the luxury of the capital extended itself fearfully, the profession of arms was discarded, and the guardianship of the provinces committed to the care of mercenaries. The name of Roman, once the most formidable in the

world, now became the most contemptible; and while their wealth and luxury held out a strong temptation to the cupidity of the barbarian hordes, their weakness and effeminacy rendered them an easy prey to their irruptions. "In short," says Montesquieu, "the history of the Romans is this: they overcame all the world by the force of their maxims; but when they had arrived at empire, the republic could no longer subsist. A change in the form of government became necessary, and the adoption by this government of maxims contrary to the original ones was the cause of its decline from greatness."

We have dwelt so long upon the fortunes of ancient states that we have but little space to enlarge upon those of modern date. But in the histories which we have touched upon already we may find sufficient proof of our position that no state is free from a principle of decay; for human nature and human institutions are still essentially the same as they were from the beginning; and though the external condition of modern kingdoms be somewhat different from that of ancient empires, the principles at work in all remain unchanged, and various as may be the forms of their decline, none will escape the common lot of mortality. Ancient history, then, is the mirror of modern times, and the revolutions of antiquity, with but slight variations, are now being reacted. The accumulated wisdom of ages has indeed taught us to frame our constitutions on somewhat different and more excellent

bases, but not all the prudence of the legislator, not all the art of the ruler, can avail to eradicate that principle of corruption which is ever slowly, but surely, working the downfall of all human prosperity.

The kingdoms of the old world have long since mouldered away and sunk into oblivion; it is therefore easier to trace the progress of decay in them than it is in states which are yet flourishing, and which we may venture to hope will still continue to flourish for many centuries. Yet modern history, too, has its examples of the uncertainty of national greatness. Spain, that great, that powerful, that wealthy country, has long since resigned the rank which she once occupied amongst the powers of Europe. The states of Italy, formerly so remarkable for their vigour, their commerce, and their policy, have one by one sunk into insignificance: Venice, Florence, Milan, Genoa, Pisa, have yielded to the destiny which, sooner or later, awaits us all. And that extraordinary authority which was at one time established by the papal see has now for many centuries been passing away, till the arms of Napoleon have reduced it to the merest shadow.

But we have said enough of the history of the past to justify our assertion. We have noted the greatness and dominion of every one of the states of antiquity whose career was the most marked by distinguishing features. We have looked for, and found, in each a

principle of decay; and in each have we seen its workings and its termination. What, then, is our conclusion? If Egypt and Persia, if Greece and Rome, if Carthage and Macedon, have perished, may we not fairly conclude that our days also are numbered; and that, wise as is our constitution, sound as is its basis, admirable as is its superstructure, yet a period must come—though distant, very distant may it be!—at which even that constitution must be overthrown, not so much from any inherent fault of its own as from the natural effects which result from the intoxication of success, and the inability of man to remain satisfied even with those institutions which have raised him to greatness. But it is vain to adhere with blind pertinacity to the wisest of institutions, as though they were in themselves sufficient to prop up the state, if the mainspring of all, the morals and religion of the people, be left to decline and grow corrupt. Sparta retained the same form of constitution for seven hundred years; but the vices and degeneracy of the people rendered them by degrees incapable of enduring it, and the attempt to enforce once more its provisions was a main cause of the ruin of the state. It was the want of virtue, the absence of a national conscience, which ruined Sparta. From the moment when they condemned the treachery of Phœbidas, but availed themselves of its fruits, the doom of their republic was sealed; within three years from that period they had reached the summit of

their greatness, and had begun to decline in a manner so remarkable that the contemporary historian does not hesitate to ascribe it to the divine wrath which their perfidy had awakened. Sparta fell from a want of virtue. And have not all other states fallen from the same cause? It is not that success in itself destroys a state; but that success unveils and gives opportunities for the display of the natural corruption of man. Ἀρχὴ τὸν ἄνδρα δείξει, and, alas! when has any nation stood the test of great prosperity? Some forms of government are more complex than others, and are so artfully put together, that one part continues to support another even after the principle and life of the whole has departed; the several elements remain still balanced, and the strength of the superstructure does not seem to have diminished, although the foundation be decayed and gone. But this seeming prosperity is a shadow which the very smallest impulse from without will suffice to destroy, just as the all but desperate enterprise of seven Theban exiles overthrew the whole power of Lacedæmon. The true security of a state consists in its adherence to the right principle, not to mere external forms, for these, as we saw in the case of Rome, may be often changed without danger if the vital principle be sound; but if that be affected, every change is fraught with the most imminent peril.

Let us but consider for a moment how vast was

that influence which the philosophical sects from time to time prevalent in the ancient nations exercised upon the fortunes of the state. Their progressive changes have been for the most part very similar. At first the rude and simple inhabitants of the woods or small villages were content with legends of heroes and demigods of their own or neighbouring countries; their worship was confined to these, and to some of those visible powers of nature to which they, in their ignorance, attributed a separate existence. Then, as they emerged from barbarism, and slowly struggled on towards light and knowledge, physical science has progressed, and the heavenly bodies have become the subjects of curious speculations instead of blind adoration. The various systems of polytheism have then sprung up, and for several succeeding centuries been altered and new modelled as the state advanced to higher degrees of civilisation and intelligence. The old, fearful, undefined fables of Chaos and Night have gradually given place to the dominion of Uranus and Saturn, and the yet more modern authority of Jupiter. Much that was absurd and childish is done away, at the same time that much valuable but latent truth is also rejected; while in the progress of the state the same change is taking place, and the increase of knowledge is accomplishing its work, bringing with it much good and much evil together. As a freer spirit of inquiry in religion and philosophy takes place, as superstition loses its hold upon the minds

of men, and knowledge supersedes ignorance, there will grow up along with these great and inestimable blessings an overweening confidence, a disregard for authority, an impatience of restraint, an assertion of the supposed rights of man, and a determined hostility to everything which can by any possibility be imagined to invade them. The greatness of the state will now be past its summit; atheism and lawlessness will go hand in hand to work evil, as civil and religious light and liberty had before done to work good. Few states afford a more striking example of this than Athens: democracy and the Sophists went together to work her ruin, and they were not long in effecting it. Soon a luxurious and enervating philosophy, like that of Epicurus, will obtain, and the rulers and people will fall into a fatal slumber, offering themselves as an easy prey to the first invader. Such was the fate of Rome: the indolent and careless philosophy which, in strong contrast to the stoicism of earlier and better days, marks the conclusion of the republic, and the greater part of the imperial dominion, was a manifest token of the decay of its civil power. Nor is it a little remarkable that during one brief period, when the sterner voice of stoicism was for a while raised, and an attempt to restore the virtue of the state was made, the ancient spirit of Rome seemed for a moment to be roused, and amidst the hopeless career of vice and weakness which her annals in general present to us, the historian loves

to dwell upon the short but pleasing exception afforded by the reigns of the Antonines.

There is no state whose history we can peruse without perceiving the close connection of its virtue and success, of its immorality and its fall. Numberless are the instances in which a flourishing empire has been on a sudden destroyed, in so wonderful and unaccountable a manner that none can fail to recognise the just vengeance of the divine power, provoked by some flagrant act of wrong and impiety. Numberless, too, are the examples of a slow decay of power accompanying the gradual degeneracy of the nation's philosophical creed. It is not strange that it should be so; but to us there is a deeper lesson to be learnt from these frequent and striking warnings. If heathen countries, whose very light was but darkness, can teach us that the greatness and duration of a state depend on somewhat more than the extent of its dominion, the power of its arms, the splendour of its treasures, the wisdom of its rulers, or the courage of its generals; if heathen moralists and philosophers can trace the pre-eminence of their country to its piety and reverence for the gods, and its obedience to the dictates of religion; surely we, who are blessed with a light denied to them—a light which teaches us whence alone it is that honour, and greatness, and power, and dominion are derived—surely we should never forget to cling fast to the rock upon which all our past renown, all our future hopes, are anchored;

to remember with gratitude the blessings which have been hitherto showered down upon us, and the privilege which has been granted us of standing foremost against the flood of atheism and lawlessness which is now fast setting in, as formerly against the errors of superstition and the bygone encroachments of papacy. We cannot but see that we have been raised up to our exalted station for some wise purpose, to perform some task for the advancement of the unfathomable designs of the Almighty. Let us tremble lest we be found wanting to this task, forgetful of our obligations, and of Him to whom we owe them. Let us remember that He needs us not; and that, should we be found unfaithful, He who has raised us thus high can hurl us in a moment from all the blessings we enjoy.

"Man," says Lord Bacon,[1] "when he resteth and assureth himself upon divine protection and favour, gathereth a force and faith which human nature in itself could not obtain. And as it is in particular persons, so it is in nations. Never was there such a state for magnanimity as Rome; of this state, hear what Cicero saith: 'Quam volumus, licet, patres conscripti, nos amemus, tamen nec numero Hispanos, nec robore Gallos, nec calliditate Pœnos, nec artibus Græcos, nec denique hoc ipso hujus gentis et terræ domestico nativoque sensu Italos ipsos et Latinos, sed pietate, ac religione, atque hâc unâ sapientiâ, quod Deorum immortalium numine omnia regi gubernarique perspeximus, omnes gentes nationesque superavimus.'"

[1] Essay on Atheism.

II.

ON TASTE.

A LECTURE

DELIVERED TO

THE LITERARY SOCIETY, EXETER,

IN 1850.

ALL that we can suggest about this lecture is, that the subject arose in Sir Stafford Henry Northcote's mind in consequence of the preparations then being made to open the Great Exhibition of 1851, in which Exhibition he took a lively interest, and played a prominent part as Secretary. Many references with regard to the Exhibition will be found in his letters of that time, when they are published in the Memoirs.

I AM conscious that in selecting the subject of Taste for this evening's consideration, I am sinning against the honoured old proverb which warns us that the matter is one on which we ought not to dispute, or rather that I am sinning against the construction which has very often been put upon it; for my own view of the saying is, that while

it is a very useful maxim for persons who desire to argue without quarrelling, it was never intended to discourage those who are engaged in the education of others, or of themselves, from inquiring into the laws of taste, and endeavouring to improve their own perceptions or those of their pupils by study and reflection. People are much too apt to content themselves with frivolous excuses for escaping the labour of forming a correct taste, and it cannot fail to be useful occasionally to remind them that taste is not a mere instinct incapable of change or improvement, but a faculty which they may use like other faculties, and which is susceptible of being cultivated or depraved to an indefinite extent.

National taste, again—by which I mean the taste pervading the great body of a nation—is a subject much more deserving of attention than many will at first believe; and the statesman who neglects such opportunities as he may have of studying, improving, and directing the taste of those whom he has to govern, is guilty of a great error, of which he will reap very unexpected fruits. National greatness depends upon the character of the people more than upon the systems of law under which they live; and national taste, as we commonly understand the term, goes a very great way towards the formation of national character. A very wise man once said, "Give me the writing of a nation's songs, and I will give you the writing of their laws;" and a like importance might very pro-

perly be attached to other means of influencing the minds and tastes of the community. Laws, written or unwritten, are but a dead letter when they are not in accordance with the national character. Those which will be observed rigidly by a grave and serious people, will be ridiculed and evaded by a people of a frivolous turn of mind. Those which can be enforced in a country which is distinguished by a spirit of indulgent toleration, will become engines of oppression which cannot be borne among a gloomy and stern nation which can extend no favour to the most venial transgression. We praise the British constitution, and we do so very justly. We admire its well-adjusted balance of powers, its union of order with liberty, and many other excellences. But give the same constitution to another nation, and see how they fail in its application; in one it becomes a cloak for despotism and corruption, in another a veil for licentiousness and unrule. The virtue is not so much in the written formulas of the constitution, but in the character of the people who live under it, and whom it suits so well. I, of course, do not deny that in providing for the present and future welfare of the nation, it is the imperative duty of the statesman to keep the constitution in good repair, and to see that it is adapted to the wants of the time; but I contend that this is by no means all that is required, and that the guardians of the commonwealth are bound, especially in times of change and development like the present, to devote

their best attention to every method that can be pursued for giving the national character a sound and healthy tone. Of some methods which occur to me I shall presently take occasion to speak; but I must first take the opportunity of offering a few remarks upon the nature of the faculty which we call taste, and upon the means we have of distinguishing between that which is good or correct, and that which is bad or incorrect taste—a question which is necessary to be considered before we come to that of the means by which taste may best be cultivated.

Taste, then, is the faculty which we exercise when we decide whether we like or dislike any person or thing submitted to our observation. In its original meaning, the word signifies, as you know, one of the five senses of the body; but the faculty to which we commonly give the name is exercised not only upon objects which can be perceived by means of the bodily senses, but also, in some cases, upon abstract ideas,—as, for instance, in poetry, when we say that such a line or expression is in good taste, or in bad taste, as the case may be—or, again, in relation to a man's conduct, when we say such behaviour is, or is not, to our taste; and so other instances might be given in which taste is exercised upon objects which we can neither hear, see, nor feel with our bodily organs. But upon whatever it is exercised, its operation is always the same; it tells us instinctively what to choose and what to avoid—what is agreeable and

what is disagreeable to our nature; and it resembles our other senses in this, that it is as hard to make us reject its evidence as to make us disbelieve our eyes or our ears.

It is this last characteristic which has given occasion for the proverb I have already quoted, that we cannot dispute about tastes. You may persuade a man to submit his taste to his judgment—to give up what he likes, and accept what he does not like—and you may, by education, lead him to change his tastes and adopt others; but however you may convince him that he ought to like A and to dislike B, when in fact he does the contrary, you can no more persuade him that he does so than you can persuade him that he sees black when he is conscious that he sees white.

You are, however, all of you aware that the senses may be educated to a very high degree. Our sense of seeing, for instance, is at first very imperfect. A child is some little time before it appears to distinguish objects at all; and when it does, it makes great mistakes as to their relative size and position; it has no idea what is, and what is not, within its reach; but by degrees it learns to estimate these points with some degree of accuracy, though still it is far from discerning all that grown men have learnt to discern. It does not perceive, for instance, that the trees in an avenue do not really meet in a point, nor that the moon is of a much larger size than it appears. These are matters which it gradually learns for itself, or is taught by

others, until it is able to make the same use of its eyes as those around it. At this point the greater number stop; but some persons cultivate their faculties much further, and bring themselves to great perfection in the art of seeing, so as to become excellent marksmen, or draughtsmen, or expert in judging of size, weight, distance, and so forth, by the eye; and thus the education of the eye improves their powers of seeing to a very great extent.

The same might be said of all the other senses of the body, and so may the same be said of this faculty of taste, which, as we have seen, may be compared to a bodily sense in this respect. The taste of a child, though it has the advantage of not having been corrupted, is very imperfect. Generally speaking, he has not learnt enough of the subjects on which he exercises it to be able to exercise it correctly. He likes glaring colours because they most easily make an impression upon him, and fix themselves in his mind, while the more delicate distinctions between different shades of the same colour, or between one neutral tint and another, escape his notice. He admires size rather than symmetry of form in many things, because he has not learnt the meaning of the things themselves, and the value of their different parts. The first time he sees a picture he will prefer one in which undue prominence is given to a particular figure, from not understanding that the whole ought to tell a connected story. Taste, in short, depends upon the power of

association, and he has as yet no stock of ideas to associate with what he sees. If, therefore, he exercises his taste, or critical faculty, at all, he is likely to exercise it wrongly, unless he has the advantage of an instructor, who will supply his mind with ideas, will point out to him beauties and defects, and will take the trouble of making him try to find out the like for himself in other objects. In other words, he needs to be taught the laws of taste; and I think, after what I have said, I may fairly infer that there is no more absurdity in teaching a child the laws of taste than in teaching him the laws of seeing. Indeed, in the latter case the teaching is, perhaps, less essential, because the child has instinct enough to use his other senses in order to correct errors in vision, and soon learns by feeling and moving to distinguish distant objects from neighbouring ones, and heavy objects from light ones; whereas in matters of taste, he might go very far wrong indeed for want of any such natural check upon the progress of error. In the meanwhile his powers of discernment will become blunted, and the evil, by neglect, will become incurable.

Let us, then, consider what the laws of taste are, and first let us see whether we can find the lawgiver from whom we have received them, and the statute-book in which he has written them for our information. The lawgiver is the God of nature, and the works of creation are the book in which His laws are written. Different as those works are from each other, we know

of all of them that they are very good. In them, if we look at them with understanding eyes, we shall find the most perfect specimens of all that is beautiful in form, of all that is lovely in colour, of all that is exquisite in contrivance or perfect in symmetry; in them we shall find richness which never cloys and simplicity which is never mean, variety without confusion, and uniformity without sameness; we shall see the parts subordinate to the whole, and yet each part as perfect in itself as if it had engaged the whole undivided attention of its Maker. In short, whether we look to the delicate tracery of a leaf, a flower, or an insect's wing, or to the majestic grandeur of a mountain scene, or the expanse of an ocean, we shall ever find in nature an inexhaustible treasury of beauty from which we may, if we will, derive the laws by which alone we can hope to produce what is beautiful for ourselves. The laws of taste, then, are founded on the study of nature, and the one safe test of loveliness in any work of our own is its accordance with the works of nature. Nothing can be beautiful which is unnatural.

Yet here we must go a little more into detail. There is very great danger of error in attempts at being what we call natural, and I must carefully guard myself against being supposed to advocate the indiscriminate introduction of "a bit of nature," as the saying is, into a work of art. When I say that nothing can be beautiful which is not natural, I do

not mean that it must be like some particular natural object, but that it should be constructed on the same principles as those on which Nature is observed to proceed in the construction of objects of a similar character. The introduction of natural forms into a work of art, so far from securing its perfection, only render it the more difficult to make it truly natural, and very often lead to its being made truly monstrous. The forms of flowers may be very suggestive to an artist who is designing a candlestick, and the man who can compose one with half the grace which Nature bestows upon a flower may well be proud of his performance. But there is not much originality, and there is very little beauty, in copying one of her lilies or her roses, and grafting upon it the apparatus necessary for holding the candle. A rose was never intended for such an office, and cannot be made to perform it without exciting a sensation of pain in every true admirer of its native loveliness. If the cup which holds the candle is visibly stuck into the flower, with which it manifestly has nothing to do, the result is a monster, as indefensible, though not so startling, as a sphinx or a centaur. If, on the other hand, the cup be so artfully concealed as to make the flower itself appear to perform its office, then we are tormented with the feeling that it is not strong enough, or is in some other way unsuitable. To make a candlestick natural, we must make it as Nature herself would have made it, or as it may

be supposed likely that she would have made it, so far as we can judge from the analogy of her other works. It is in the necessity of doing this that the difficulty and the dignity of what is called ornamental art consist, and hence it derives the name by which we often distinguish it from fine art—that, namely, of reproductive art. No true ornamentist can be content with mere copying; he must create. He may, and indeed he must, study deeply how Nature works, and how she produces the beautiful results which he sees around him; but to whatever extent he may profit by her suggestions, he must use them as suggestions only, and must make them subordinate to the main end of his own work. Mere copying will not and cannot serve his purpose.

I must, however, here observe, that under certain limitations the introduction of simple natural forms into ornament is both justifiable and beautiful. A candlestick, for instance, must not be made in the form of a flower; but it would be perfectly allowable, and is often very beautiful, to represent the candlestick with flowers twined round it, and they may be so arranged, if we please, as wholly to conceal the candlestick itself, and to present to the eye nothing but a mass of natural forms. This may be done without raising any painful sensation, if the arrangement is such as to suggest the idea of the ornament having been added to the candlestick after due provision has been made for the uses to which it is to

be put. This is strictly natural, and if well managed is as pleasing as the other system is unsightly and monstrous.

But there is still another mode of introducing natural forms, which is universally admitted by the greatest masters of ornamental art, and which is called conventional treatment. This consists in altering the form as it is in nature to something just sufficiently unlike to take away the painful impression that a natural object is put to a use for which it is not fitted, while the beauty of Nature's workmanship is still to a great extent retained. Of conventional ornament thousands of examples might at once be given; perhaps the most obvious and suitable to our purpose is that of the introduction of the human figure as a support, which we so frequently notice in architecture, in carving, and in various kinds of ornamental work. The human figure is the grandest work in the whole of animated nature, and from very early times architects and ornamentists have seen the advantage of introducing it into their works; but it will be observed that when it is introduced as a part of the work itself, and is not merely an ornament carved upon it, it is always in good works altered from the natural form. Either an unnatural and impossible stiffness is given to it, as in the Greek caryatides; or the bust terminates in a shapeless pedestal, as in the Roman hermæ; or the dignified face and breast of the man is finished off into a lion or other animal,

as in the Egyptian sphinxes. In all these the treatment is what we call conventional. It suggests the idea of man, and yet we see at once that it is not a mere representation of man. The effect in these cases is generally beautiful, but in proportion as the treatment becomes natural so does it also become disagreeable. We could bear to see a marble arch resting on a sphinx, or a pediment supported by caryatides; but when we have a tiptoe figure presented to us in the modern French taste, with every limb in motion and every muscle naturally developed, bearing on his head a clock of twice or thrice his own dimensions, the effect is both ludicrous and unsightly. We have before us a correct representation of a creature of flesh and blood like ourselves, performing an action which is a sculptured lie; and the violation of truth and nature must of necessity offend all who are not incurably corrupted. The case is different when the slightest hint of conventional treatment is given. Place the figure in an attitude of strong endurance, bow the head, and give the clock the form of a globe resting on the shoulders, and you at once recall the accepted fable of Atlas, and the composition may become pleasing instead of disgusting. The allusion to the fable makes the group conventional.

We see, then, the principles of the two great schools of ornament, the natural and the conventional. In a piece of natural ornament we must remember to finish the construction first, and to adorn it by the addition

of natural forms of beauty afterwards; and if we do so, the more correctly we represent those forms the better. Only beware of putting the natural form to an unnatural use. If you have a fancy for carving a snake on a drinking-cup, let it be coiled round the vessel, or even, if you like it, round the handle, but do not make the handle consist of a single snake. There would be no harm in making it consist of two snakes intertwined in the conventional form which they bear on the fabulous Greek caduceus, for that would at once take the work into the other school; but if the ornament is intended to be natural, the work must be complete and fit for use without the ornament at all, and the ornament must be capable of removal, in idea at least, without impairing the utility of the construction. This is the first great rule in natural ornament. The second is, that the ornament when added must not destroy or interfere with the use, nor even appear to do so. We must not make our handles uncomfortable by carving thorns or sharp angles upon them, however beautiful those objects may be in themselves. Neither should we decorate a surface which ought to be flat with ornament of a kind which destroys the idea of flatness—as, for instance, we ought not to cover a carpet with well-shaded trellis-work and bunches of fruit or flowers in such high relief as to look as though they would trip us up. In such a case the flowers should be conventional, and should be drawn without shading, so as to

appear as flat as the carpet really is. If, then, we adhere faithfully to these two great rules in natural ornament, that of not allowing it to take the place of the construction, and that of not allowing it to spoil, or appear to spoil, the utility of the construction, we shall run comparatively little risk of failure in its application. There are, indeed, many other points to be attended to, but in general they will be found to arise out of these two; and I should be wandering too far from my subject were I at present to enter on them any further. For the same reason I must postpone what I have to say on the subject of conventional ornament, and must return from this digression, into which I was led, as you may remember, by the necessity of qualifying, or rather of explaining, my broad assertion that the study of nature is the foundation of all the laws of taste.

Let us now consider what the laws are which we may deduce from this study. The first and most important is, that we should admire only what is true. Honesty is one of the chief elements of good taste. In nature everything is honest; all her works will bear, nay, demand, the closest examination. Are we struck with the grandeur of a mass of rock? We may approach and handle it, may measure its size, break a fragment off any part of it and find it uniform, weigh it, analyse it, do what we will with it, and depart after all with ten times the admiration we felt at the first sight. Or do we love the beauty of a leaf, the colours

of a feather, the brilliancy of a gem? Apply to them the strictest tests, magnify them to a million times their size, scrutinise their proportions, cut them up into the smallest pieces, you will find them still true; not a particle of false effect will be discovered, not a deceptive line, not a meretricious tint. I need not say how far beyond the reach of human skill is such perfection, the most remarkable because the most evidently undesigned evidence which the works of nature afford of the omnipotence of their great Creator; but having noticed this striking excellence in nature, I must not omit to call your attention to the humiliating contrast too often presented by works of art. It is not blamable in man that he falls short of perfection, but it is highly so when he deliberately chooses what is imperfect. It is the great reproach of art in modern times that it sacrifices truth to effect, that it is consciously and deliberately false, that its works are what it is becoming the fashion to call shams. Within the last few years, it is right to say that efforts have been made, and with some success, to remove the evil; but it is too much ingrained in our characters to be at once or easily got rid of. By sound instruction, by wholesome reproofs, by good example, we may gradually diminish it, and it is our duty to neglect no opportunity of doing so, but we must not be disappointed if we find our progress slow. The whole life of society has become so incrusted with deceit that it is difficult to have honesty in art; at the same time we must

remember that wherever we can introduce that honesty we are doing good service not only to the art itself, which we redeem from deception, but to the whole fabric of society, to which it cannot fail to be a blessing to be made acquainted with the nobleness of truth in any part of its occupations or amusements.

It would be tedious were I to enter at length upon the nature of the fault to which I have alluded. I will not dilate upon the offence which we commit against good taste when we build a church with a fine side towards the street, and three rubbishy, discreditable walls behind, with perhaps a smart parapet showing along the top of them; or when we dress up our children with paste-diamonds and sham pearls; or when we put up a false ruin to add beauty to a landscape, or ornament our tables with bouquets of artificial flowers. In all such cases we are insulting those whom we endeavour to please, by attempting to pass off something upon them which they soon find out to be less valuable than we pretend; we are thereby destroying their pleasure in real beauties by raising a suspicion of their truth, making them, as a modern writer has observed, look with distrust upon real gold in consequence of the immense proportion which we present to them of mere gilding; and what is worst, we are accustoming them and ourselves to be pleased with these attempts to keep up appearances, as it is called, which have led to so much evil in social life; for the man who takes delight in sham jewels and artificial flowers will go on

to other ways of making a show in the world above his real means—will ape the style of living, the plate, the equipages, of those who are much richer than himself, and sooner than be plain will condescend to an almost incredible amount of meanness. The nature of false taste in such cases as these is clear enough, and requires no further observations; but before I pass from the subject of honesty as the first requisite of taste, I must allude to a more subtle form of deception which, under the garb of superior truth, sometimes creeps in, and does much injury. All imitations, in order to be honest, must show that they are imitations and nothing more. If they show this plainly enough, they may, if good of their kinds, be in good taste. But when the imitation goes out of its province and tries to pass itself off for the actual thing of which it is the imitation, it is deceptive and in bad taste. Thus in painting we represent objects on paper or canvas as correctly as we can, and the more correctly we do it the better the painting is, provided we do not attempt by any trick of the art to give the production the appearance of being a reality, and not the representation of a reality. A picture, like that with which many of you must be familiar from having seen the prints, of a smuggler on the look-out, in which the figure of the man appears to come out of the frame, and gives you at first the impression of being a solid form, and not a flat painting on the canvas, is a mere deformity, and no more deserves

praise on account of the deception than a ventriloquist deserves admiration for making his voice appear to come from the opposite end of the room. As startling deceptions such things may have their attraction, but the one is just as much a work of art as the other; and it is in as bad taste to compare such a picture as that which I have alluded to, with a fine representation of the human figure by a good master, as it would be to prefer a ventriloquist to a finished orator or an accomplished actor. But the point to which I wish to draw your particular attention is the bad taste exhibited by critics when they condemn works of art for not being natural, the truth perhaps being that the whole charm of the work consists in the trifling deviation from nature of which they complain. I will take as an instance the French criticisms upon the plays of Shakespeare. You know how Shakespeare usually constructs his plays; one scene is sometimes laid in England and the next in France; one act is perhaps supposed to take place twenty years before the next; an infant is born in the beginning of a play, and married at the end: yet all these events are represented by a set of players on the same boards, and in the course of four or five hours. This appeared to the French critics an unpardonable anomaly. They considered that in order to preserve what they call the "unities" of the drama, nothing should be represented upon the stage but what it is physically possible might take place upon a single spot within a few hours. A great deal

of criticism has therefore been levelled by them at poor Shakespeare, whom they admit to have been what they call a clever barbarian, but whom they regard as having sinned against the fundamental rules of good taste, because he refused to be bound by fetters which would have reduced his plays to mere shadows of what they are, would have invested them with perhaps a fictitious reality, but would have destroyed that truth in the representation of nature, and of the workings of the mind of man, which is now their greatest charm. His writings are true in their essence, false only, or apparently false, in some unimportant accidental circumstances; while the works of the opposite school, coldly correct and irreprehensible in all that is accidental, are too often wanting in the higher element of essential truth. We may, then, conclude this part of our subject by laying down as the first of the rules of good taste, that we should look for truth in the object we criticise, and that the truth we seek should be the truth of essence, not the truth of accident; truth in conception rather than in mere execution; truth in the mass of the work rather than mere correctness in its details.

Next to the attribute of truth is that of suitableness. In nature everything is well suited to its purpose, and we never meet with an instance in which use is sacrificed with a view to beauty. Glorious as the works of nature are to the sight, and rich as are the impressions of beauty which they convey to us, the

forms we admire are more than mere ornaments; each has its separate use, each its separate excellence: they seem to be created for use; the beauty they possess is apparently an accident produced without labour or intention. It is perhaps to this circumstance that they owe the influence which they exercise over our minds. Not only is our criticism disarmed when we find that the form we are examining is perfect in respect of the use for which it is designed, and that its beauty is but a further perfection, which might almost seem to be an addition undesigned by its Maker; but there is something in the very idea of suitableness which is by the law of our minds suggestive of the idea of beauty. Otherwise, why is it that we admire in one object the very qualities which would disgust us in another? A great deal of nonsense has been talked at times about imaginary lines of beauty, which are supposed to be as universally pleasing to the eye as the philosopher's stone would be universally pleasing to the pocket; but we all know well enough that the lines which we should think fine and bold in the projections of a rock would be harsh and unpleasing in the outline of a tree, and that the beautiful lightness of a slender flower would be a deformity in the trunk of an oak. It is perfectly true that what is suitable to its purpose may nevertheless be ugly, but it is also most true that what is unsuitable can never appear to us perfectly beautiful; it may strike us at first sight, and even retain its hold on our ima-

gination for a time, but by degrees the question, What does it there? will more and more often recur, and will at last mar the pleasure we take in beholding. Hence we derive an important rule, never to sacrifice utility to mere beauty, nor to aim at mere beauty without regard to utility. It is a golden maxim in architecture, ornament your constructions, and do not construct your ornaments: if you want a buttress for your building, put up one of sufficient strength, and then carve it, or otherwise decorate it as you please; but do not put up a buttress, or a sham buttress, where none is wanted, because you think a buttress looks well. The same rule holds good in other things. If you are painting a picture, introduce what is wanted to do justice to the subject you have chosen, and make it as beautiful as you can; but do not introduce matter which has nothing to do with the subject, because you think you can make a pretty thing of it. Remember your principal object, and do not sacrifice it to its accessories. If you are writing a play or a story, and have a pretty song ready written by you, which will suit and assist in the development of the main work, you may introduce it, and it will add to the beauty of the whole; but if you bring the song into a metaphysical treatise, or a historical work, with which it has nothing at all to do, its beauty will become a deformity, and it will spoil instead of enriching the fabric into which it is interwoven. Yet here again we must not state the matter too broadly.

There may be real harmony without any similarity, and I must not lead you to suppose that I am advocating nothing but a dull uniformity. Contrast is sometimes one of the principal elements of harmony, and is by no means to be set aside. What I mean is this, that in every work, whether that work be a painting, or a poem, or a building, or a piece of dress, or a piece of furniture, there should be one leading idea, and that every part of the composition should be in harmony with that idea, and suitable to the one main object of carrying it out. If this harmony be faithfully preserved, there may be as much variety among the different parts—nay, as much violent contrast between them—as the composer pleases, and if the contrast be skilfully managed, the effect of the whole will be pleasing; as when a great orator in pleading his cause mixes irony with pathos, playful wit with solid reasoning, sometimes introducing a happy illustration, sometimes rising into majestic eloquence, then suddenly changing to the most familiar style of explanation—at one moment thrilling his audience with fear or indignation, at another exciting them to contempt, or bringing them into good humour by judicious flattery. Nothing can be more discordant than the materials which he uses, yet the effect of the whole is harmonious, because the whole is subordinate, and immediately conducive, to his one great end—that of persuading.

And if this be so, it follows that we are not fit

judges of the harmony or want of harmony in a composition unless we know the effect which it is intended to produce—the master-end to which all the parts are subservient. Hence it happens that critics are often misled in their judgments, and blame what is worthy of praise simply because they do not understand it. Extensive and well-arranged knowledge is, next to honesty, the greatest requisite for the formation of a good taste. The third cardinal point is enthusiasm, or a love of what is beautiful for the sake of its beauty, and for the sake of the honour which a lovely creation appears to reflect upon its Creator. This is the most important, and yet the most difficult part of the whole subject. It appears to us comparatively easy to impart knowledge, and to educate men to be honest, if only they are willing to learn; but that which we call enthusiasm seems to be incapable of being given, and to be a question of natural temperament, with which education has nothing to do.

Now here, I think, there is a great and mischievous error. I do not deny that one man is by nature of a warmer and more enthusiastic temper than another; nor do I suppose it possible that any education could inspire the less ardent with the genius which flashes spontaneously from the other; but I fully believe that all men, with a few exceptions, occurring not more frequently than the cases of persons deficient in reason or other faculties,—almost all men, I say, have such

an amount of feeling for beauty implanted in them by nature, as might by good education be improved into sound taste and a reasonable appreciation of what is good in the works of others. The lives which many of us lead are quite sufficient to account for the suppression of this faculty in those cases where it appears to be wanting. We are so made that if we neglect to use the powers we have, we lose them altogether. A man who should hold his arm by his side for two or three years would find it difficult or impossible to raise it at the end of them; and so, one who should be accustomed from his earliest infancy to neglect the exercise of his taste for beauty, and to turn all his energies exclusively to the pursuit of gain, and what is called the business of life, can hardly be expected to retain the power of recalling at will what he has so long abandoned. But even under the most unfavourable circumstances, a love of beauty in some form or other, though too often in a perverted one, strives to develop itself in almost every man, and supplies ample evidence that the natural quality is not wanting, had it but been duly cultivated, informed, and refined by care. Almost every man, when circumstances allow him and inclination leads him to indulge in relaxation from the business of his life, shows some desire to surround himself with beautiful, or what he considers beautiful, objects. Through want of knowledge, and through want of honesty, he is often led into grievous errors of taste, and surrounds himself with deformity

instead of beauty. He loves glitter and splendour, no matter how unreal, no matter how unsuitable, for he has never been educated to perceive beauty in simplicity, or to shrink, as it were instinctively, from a parade of false decoration. Never having thought it worth while to pay any attention to these matters in his earlier days, he naturally fails when he attempts to display his taste at last; just as a man would fail who should expect to perform in music, without having ever taken the trouble to learn the science, and having no other natural advantages for succeeding than an ear which can discern a treble from a bass. The failure of such a man would not be taken as a proof that he was physically incapable of excelling in music: had he spent some years in its study he might have become respectably proficient in it; and his failure is to be attributed to the want of study and other advantages. So, too, the failure of our would-be man of taste is to be attributed to no physical imperfection, but to the absence of acquired advantages. I am speaking, of course, of the causes of his inferiority to that which I believe the mass of mankind might attain to. I do not suppose that any study, or any acquired advantages whatever, could make a Raphael, or a Shakespeare, out of the ordinary mould in which men are cast. Great geniuses are of nature's creation, and appear but rarely; but it is within the power of man to raise the standard of taste among ordinary mortals very far above the level at which it is usually found.

There is no doubt that the taste of the English people is at the present moment very far below what it ought to be; and a very great number of thinking men amongst us have deliberately concluded that their countrymen are physically incapable of ever improving. Now this is a doctrine from which I entirely and indignantly dissent. I believe the English people, if favourably circumstanced, would develop as fine a taste for beauty, in whatever direction, as any other people on the face of the earth; and though I recognise several important disadvantages under which they labour, I think I perceive means by which those disadvantages might be compensated or corrected. The first great disadvantage to which I allude is the hurried and business-like character of the life which so many of us lead. The increase of wealth, the presence of competition in all branches of industry, the eager desire to maintain a good position among our neighbours, and the difficulty of doing so, give to our daily life the character of a continued struggle, wherein we must not relax, and which is incompatible with the pursuit of art or of fine literature. These are therefore neglected during the greater part of our lives; and when the season arrives at which they might be cultivated at leisure, the taste for them is wellnigh gone.

For this disadvantage the best remedy will be found in an early education and cultivation of the love of beauty and art in the young. The man who

begins the business of life without any previously acquired tastes of this description, has indeed but a slender chance of making up for lost time afterwards; but it is comparatively easy, and it is certainly beneficial, to keep up and to improve tastes which have been already formed, even in the midst of most serious occupations. Scarcely any man is so wholly absorbed by business as to have no time for recreation, and he might as well employ the time he has in a profitable as in an unprofitable manner. A young man with a taste for music may find time in the evening for an hour's occasional enjoyment of it, which will not interfere more with his business, and will be much better for his moral being, than if the same time had been spent in dissipation or idle gossip. Or if he have a turn for poetry, he may give to Shakespeare and Milton the time which others waste, and do worse than waste, upon an inferior novel or an abusive periodical. His means may be small, yet he may advantageously devote what others spend upon sensual pleasures to pleasures of a higher and purer character; and if a right turn have been given to his taste in youth, and if he can be preserved from corrupting influences, he will generally do so. Were education of the right sort common among those in his rank of life, the danger of his being led astray would be all the less; for finding companions with tastes similar to his own, the one would assist the other, and much might be done for mutual cultiva-

tion and instruction. As sequels to a good education, such institutions as are now becoming common throughout the country — such institutions as this which I have the pleasure of addressing — will be found peculiarly valuable. They afford opportunities, to those who choose to avail themselves of them, of pursuing studies of a refining character, by giving them access to books, by bringing them together to discuss subjects of general interest, and by enabling them to form plans for mutual improvement. At present they are in their infancy, and have not accomplished one-half the good of which I believe them to be capable; but the seeds of good are sown, and we may hope that in time they will bear their fruit. An institution like this should not stand alone, but should form part of a series adapted to different parts of a man's education. It should be connected with a museum, with a picture and sculpture gallery, with schools of art, drawing-classes and music-classes, and with a really good library of valuable books. These things cannot start into life in a moment; but they ought to be borne in mind, and the institution ought to be continually approximating to them. Standing still in a case of this sort is pretty nearly equivalent to going back. The interest which attaches to mere lectures will diminish; people cannot go on listening to lectures all their lives without getting tired of them, unless they have some pursuit to which they can apply what the lecturer has told them. A lecture

on some point of natural history—say, for instance, on fossils—may be very interesting at the time, and the hearers may go away much gratified and instructed; but it would be of tenfold value if delivered in a place where there was access to a museum in which good specimens of fossils could be seen and examined at leisure, and in which there were books for the instruction of those who might wish to enter upon the study of geology. And as for lectures upon the principles of beauty and the laws of taste, half-a-dozen casts of the best of the Greek statues, arranged where they could be properly seen, would be worth all the discourses that ever were penned. It is one of the disadvantages which we labour under in England, particularly in the provinces, that we have so little opportunity of becoming familiar with beautiful forms. It has always been remarked of the Greeks and the Italians that much of their superiority in the arts may be attributed to the fact of their living much out of doors, in countries where the beauties of nature are conspicuously displayed, and could not fail to influence the mind. In England the difference of climate and of the habits of the people deprives us of this great advantage; and it is, therefore, the more necessary for us to make up for the want of it by surrounding ourselves with such objects of art as are acknowledged to be among the best models of beauty. The facilities which exist at the present time of procuring excellent casts of sculpture render it inexcus-

able in us to neglect this means of educating the eye and taste of the people. Paintings are more difficult to obtain: they cannot be mechanically reproduced like sculptures, and it is better to have none at all than to have bad ones; but with patience and attention something may be done in this way too—though the expense of purchasing fine works is a serious impediment, and would render the formation of a collection a work of many years. You are, many of you, acquainted with the system which has of late years been introduced for the advancement of art by the establishment of what are called Art Unions, in which a number of subscribers draw lots for prizes of a considerable amount, which they are required to expend upon the purchase of a work of art. I have had occasion to inquire somewhat minutely into the working of these societies, and have seen enough to satisfy me that, as at present constituted, they do much more harm than good to the cause of art, having a tendency rather to encourage the multiplication of bad pictures than the production of good ones, besides being open to many of the usual objections which apply to lotteries in general. But I fully believe that there is another kind of Art Union which might be turned to very excellent account. If the inhabitants of a provincial town would subscribe towards a fund for the purchase of works of art to be placed in a museum or place of exhibition in their own town, they would do more towards improving the taste of the neighbourhood

than could be done in any other manner. Nothing is more conducive to the formation of a good taste than familiarity with beautiful objects; the mind and the eye are insensibly brought to appreciate the beauty which is constantly placed before them, and acquire what seems an instinctive love of what is truly lovely. Trace the history of many of the greatest artists, and you will find that they attribute the earliest dawnings of their genius to their familiarity with some noted picture, some fine piece of sculpture, or perhaps some picturesque natural object with which their childhood has been spent; and on the other hand, where you find a city rich in fine works of art, or a country abounding in beautiful features, there you will find the greatest number of painters or of poets, produced as naturally by such advantages as beautiful flowers or luxuriant trees are produced by favourable climate and a favourable soil.

But education, too, is wanting, or, I should rather say, good teaching is wanted, to enable men to turn such advantages to good account. There is too much tendency in our nature to run into what is bad, just as there is a tendency in fertile soils to throw up a rank vegetation. Care and cultivation are needed to produce a right result. I am not one of those who attribute all the difference between man and man to the difference in their education. I believe in natural gifts and natural disparities. But when we see certain defects pervading a whole class of men, and ob-

serve at the same time that their education is just of the sort which might be supposed likely to occasion those defects, we cannot help connecting the two circumstances together, and regarding them as cause and consequence. Now there can be no doubt that the English as a nation are behind many of their Continental neighbours in matters of taste; they are even content to hear the charge made, and are forward to admit its truth. Nine out of ten will tell you it is the defect of the national character, and sit down under the belief that an Englishman is by nature inferior to the Frenchman in this respect, as surely as the Indian is more swarthy than the German, or the white man better shaped than the negro. Yet it is suggestive of a doubt whether such hopeless inequality really exists, when we find our leading artists occupying as high a position as any of their foreign contemporaries—when we confessedly take the lead in landscape-painting, and are ready to challenge the world to produce our superiors as colourists. If the whole nation were on a lower level, its chief ornaments would be less bright also. We look, then, a little closer, and we find, that while in England any attempts at giving artistic instruction, beyond the limits of the favoured few, are quite recent and very imperfect, in France, on the contrary, a very sound and excellent system of elementary teaching has been widely diffused throughout the country for more than a century, or a century and a half. When to this we

add that very considerable success actually has attended the efforts which have lately been made in England to supply this defect in our system, though as yet that success is not so evident as it will be when the new generation shall have sprung up, we cannot doubt that the disparity between the two nations may be greatly lessened, if not entirely removed. I have on a former occasion given you some account of the schools of design which have been of late years established in the manufacturing districts of this country. I described to you the principles upon which they were conducted, and reported the success which had thus far attended them. Since I had the honour of bringing the subject under your notice, this work has not stood still; several improvements have been made in the working of these establishments, and some very gratifying proofs have been afforded of their utility. Their difficulties, indeed, have not been fully overcome, but they are working with increased energy and hopefulness; and the active preparations which are being made throughout the country for the great industrial contest of next year have created a demand for good designs, which has had a most beneficial effect upon these institutions. It is the sanguine hope of many who are interested in the promotion of the Exhibition to which I have alluded, that it will bring forward much of the latent talent, and that it will tear away the veil which at present obscures much of the neglected talent, of this country. Perhaps there is no other way

in which we could have hoped to throw off the greatest of the burdens which our artists have yet to bear,—I mean the prejudice which decries all that is English, and exalts all that is foreign—which prefers what is bad, so it bear the name of French, to what is intrinsically better, but has the misfortune to be homespun. If it should happen, as I trust it may, that in the competition of next year English taste and English art should be so creditably displayed as to gain from the judges of the world's productions that applause which has been withheld by a timid public in this country, we may hope that thenceforward the weight unduly attached to names and traditions will be greatly diminished, and a fair chance given to native merit. This, I own, is the point to which I chiefly turn, when I consider what advantages may be expected to result from the Exhibition of next year. I know so well, and could illustrate, if I pleased, the greatness of the evil to which I have alluded, that I attach particular weight to its removal. But there are, of course, other advantages which we may look for; and the subject is, I think, sufficiently connected with that we are discussing to justify me in introducing some observations upon it in the conclusion of my remarks.

I will not detain you by entering into any detail as to the original conception of the scheme of this Exhibition by his Royal Highness Prince Albert, of the difficulties encountered when it was first proposed, of

its abandonment for some years, or of its ultimate revival and successful publication last year. It is now, I believe, sufficiently known that the scheme is not one which was originated by others and adopted by royalty, but that the merit of the conception, and of the arrangement of many of the leading details, is due to the Prince alone. Its success is now so far assured as to enable us to predict with the greatest confidence that, accidents apart, it will more than realise his expectations. There is every reason to believe that every quarter of the world, and every department of human industry, will be well and fairly represented in it. Looking at it from one point of view, we shall see specimens of all, or nearly all, those raw products of nature which human ingenuity has as yet succeeded in turning to account in the business of human life; next them, we shall see the results which man has obtained from the application of labour and skill to these raw materials; and finally, the tools and the machinery with which this great victory of mind over matter has been obtained. In a word, it will be a monument erected to mark the point at which human industry has now arrived. Or, looking again from another direction, we shall see at a glance the characteristics of different nations,—the natural advantages of one, the acquired skill of another; here mechanical invention, there refinement of taste, largely developed; the gifts of God improved in one, in another neglected or misused. I cannot but think

that, in both points of view, the sight will be a remarkable one. To a religious mind it can hardly fail to be suggestive of the thought that man is, as it were, giving an account to his Creator of the progress he has made in fulfilling the original command, "Be ye fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it." Or it may seem like a thankful display of the good things which God has given us, and awaken again with equal appropriateness the song of praise which our great poet puts into the mouths of those who hymned the glories of creation:—

> "These are Thy glorious works, Parent of good,
> Almighty, Thine this universal frame.
> How wondrous fair! Thyself how wondrous then!"

Or again, we may consider how the display must strike those who have been labouring all their lives in some obscure corner to produce some one of its humbler, but still essential, elements. If we could imagine a man who had worked all his life at making watch-springs, and yet had never seen a watch, and could suppose him introduced to one for the first time, and shown how his own work took its place in it, and how it was one of the most essential parts of a most wondrous piece of mechanism, how very much it would raise his ideas of his occupation! Probably he had before looked upon it as the most uninteresting possible way of earning a subsistence; but now a new light would break in upon him, and he would return

to work with a sense of dignity, as one who is a humble but important agent in great scientific discoveries. Something like this will very probably take place in the minds of hundreds and thousands on the occasion of this Exhibition. Our system of division of labour has been carried so far as very seriously to interfere with the unity of our conception of results. It is one of the evils of which we must complain when we are reviewing the state of the national taste, that too much attention is given to perfection of details, too little to harmony of the whole work. If we seek merely excellence of execution, we can hardly divide and subdivide labour too much; but the practice is injurious to originality of conception, unless corrected by such contemplation of general results, and the bearings of different parts upon each other, as I hope this Exhibition will give occasion for.

Again, I hope the interest which this occasion is likely to awaken in many quarters will not die away with the close of the Exhibition, but will bear its fruits by developing in many of the spectators tastes which they have not hitherto cultivated. Our national character is too much compounded of eager love of business and indolent repose. Few work harder than we do when we are at work, and few are more rigid in excluding from our business hours anything like relaxation; but when we are at leisure, too many of us are prone to make up for this sacrifice by giving ourselves up to frivolous, or even to merely sensual

amusements, in no respect qualified to improve or instruct the mind. The labourer goes to the ale-house, or lays himself listlessly down to pass the hours of rest from toil in simple inactivity. Men of a higher class retire from the desk or counter to read trashy novels or ludicrous periodicals, perhaps to gossip over the fire, or to waste their time in less harmless pursuits. Even among men who distinguish themselves in their own line of life, the same fault may sometimes be found. A very eminent lawyer, on being questioned as to his studies, confessed that he read nothing but law and novels; and I have myself heard of one of the highest ornaments of the same profession having read a circulating library three times through, though in that particular case I ought to add that he was a man of much general reading also. But it cannot fail to strike all who think for a moment on the point, how very much people are now given to light reading; and when we remember how much more profitably the hours thus wasted might be spent, we cannot but hail with eagerness any prospect of awakening tastes which should never have been allowed to lie dormant. Many a hint will be furnished by this Exhibition which might advantageously be pursued, many an interest aroused which ought never to be allowed to flag. In our own city, I am happy to hear that numbers of the working classes are preparing to go up to the sight; let us on our part endeavour to

keep up their interest on their return. I have learnt with very great pleasure within the last few days that steps are being taken having for their object the establishment of a Library and Museum in Exeter, under the provisions of a recent Act of Parliament which gives facilities for such undertakings. This might be a most important step; it might be the nucleus of such a chain of institutions as I have already suggested to you. But I must not dilate upon it now; perhaps I am out of order in even mentioning it. All, therefore, that I will say in conclusion is, that if we wish to raise the condition of our working classes, to render poverty less burdensome to them and labour less distasteful, to give them habits of cleanliness and of decency, and occupations which shall be incompatible with sensual indulgence; if we wish to refine the middle classes, and to render them as eager in the cultivation of the mental faculties which God has given them as they are energetic in the works of their callings and persevering in their struggle to raise themselves in the world; and if we wish to apply a corrective to the luxury and the ostentation of the rich, and to dethrone the idol of wealth from the undue position which it has taken up in the hearts of men,—we must seriously apply ourselves to remedy the defect which we have noticed in English education, to cultivate the study of the fine arts, not as an end in itself, but as an important

auxiliary to other branches of learning, and never to rest till we have wiped away the reproach which will most justly attach to us if, with our materials to work upon and our advantages, we come behind the other countries of the world, or any country whatsoever, in this article of National Taste.

III.

ACCURACY.

A LECTURE

DELIVERED AT

THE MECHANICS' INSTITUTE, FROME,

IN 1864.

Sir Stafford Northcote had been spending a quiet autumn in Devonshire, and one of the employments of his leisure time had been in taking lessons from Mr Stokes, who was then in the neighbourhood, in Mr Stokes's System of Aids to Memory. Probably the attention Sir Stafford Northcote gave to this system, and the carefully drawn-out charts explaining the connection of the method with the objects to be remembered, had brought before his immediate notice the advantages arising from the habit of accuracy. Sir Stafford Northcote learnt this method partly with a view of using it in remembering speeches made in the House of Commons, more especially those containing dates and figures. In 1865 he applied this system to Mr Gladstone's Budget speech, when he heard it delivered in the House of Commons, and was pleased to find how accurately it enabled him to take in at the time each particular figure. He tested this accuracy by referring to the reports the next day.

AS I understand the objects of this Institution, they comprise the general promotion of education and rational amusement among the middle and lower

classes. I do not conceive that you limit yourselves to the pursuit of particular branches of study; still less, that you consider yourselves as a mere club for friendly and social intercourse, or the members of a reading-room or news-room, or a society for mere amusement.

The view with which Mechanics' Institutes were in the first instance proposed, was that of affording to persons engaged in the daily business of life opportunities for self-improvement, such as were then much needed, because they were not easily to be attained. Times have now changed, and the functions of the Mechanics' Institutes have changed with them. The spread of national education, the development of a cheap and good literature, well suited to the wants of the mechanic and the artisan, the establishment of Schools of Art and Science, the introduction of the system of national and local exhibitions, and many other causes which might be mentioned, have to a great extent done away with the necessity which formerly existed for some parts at all events of the old Mechanics' Institute. But the Institute still holds a place among us, and its place is one which we could ill afford to leave empty. It still forms a link in the great educational chain,—and where it is well conducted, it is of the highest value to the educational cause. In all this movement of which I have been speaking, it is a matter of paramount importance to carry the working classes along with the stream of

progress, to secure their co-operation, to learn their wants, and to facilitate their participation in the benefits which it is desired to confer upon them. It is here that the value of the Mechanics' Institute is felt. If the Institute comprises, as it ought to do, the most active and intelligent members of the working class; if it is under the guidance, as it ought to be, of men of ability and liberal views, who possess the confidence of their fellow-townsmen, and who have leisure to work with a view to their interests,—it cannot fail to be of the highest service in bringing the several measures which are taken for the general good of the public to bear upon their own locality. Thus, to take an example, the endeavours of the Government to establish a system of instruction in art and science may be most materially aided by the co-operation of a Mechanics' Institute. So again it has been found that the organisation of the Institutes may be made powerfully to bear upon the system of middle-class examinations conducted by the Universities and by the Society of Arts. I have lately had an opportunity of seeing that this is so in the case of the great union of Mechanics' Institutes which exists in the West Riding of Yorkshire, and which has been found of such value there. One more illustration I will give of the functions which I think the Institutes may discharge, because it will bring me directly to the subject which I have proposed for our consideration this evening, and will, I hope, at once furnish my ex-

cuse for intruding myself upon your attention, and enable me to explain why I have thought that a subject which is somewhat out of the common line of lecturers may nevertheless be at least as profitable for examination as one of a triter description. I will therefore add to my list of illustrations of the services which Mechanics' Institutes may render, the part which I think they ought to play in the solution of the great question of what is (perhaps not very appropriately) called middle-class education.

You are aware that the whole subject of the education of the people of this country has lately been, and is still, undergoing careful examination on the part of the Government. Two Royal Commissions have sat within the last seven years for the purpose of inquiring, the one into the condition of the lower schools, the national schools for the poor, the other into that of a few of the highest public schools, the schools of the rich. A third Commission is now about to issue, which is to take cognisance of the ground lying between the fields of the other two inquiries, and which will doubtless find itself charged with the execution of a most difficult task. I feel convinced that if any good is to be done in the improvement of the education of the middle classes of this country, it must be done by the aid of the middle classes themselves; and I therefore say that here again I see a field of usefulness for the Mechanics' Institutes, second in importance to none of those which I have previously

glanced at. This is my proposition: It may be all very well for Commissions to inquire and to report, but it must be the public, it must be the classes principally interested, that must act. No opinions which the Commission may express, no measures which they may recommend, will be of much use, unless they succeed in carrying the opinion of the middle classes with them. I believe, therefore, that it is of paramount importance to induce the middle classes, and indeed all classes, to think the matter out for themselves; and I feel sure that the Mechanics' Institutes, if they comprise the classes which I think they ought to comprise, and if they are actuated by the spirit and guided by the intelligence which I cannot doubt prevails among them, may render a public service of the very highest magnitude by contributing in their own districts to form a sound opinion upon a question which is very much misunderstood.

Now the fundamental question which we ought to ask ourselves, but which very few persons do ask themselves, in this matter is, What end should we aim at in the education of youth? Hundreds and thousands of parents send their children to school, and go to considerable expense in their education, without having any clear conception of what the end at which they are aiming is. They wish their children to be educated like other people's, and they wish them to learn those things which other young persons in their own rank of life are learning. But they have

little or no notion what good is to come of a great part, at all events, of what is taught. They have little or no power of distinguishing between a good education and a bad one. And when the question is raised, as it is now about to be raised, What reforms are needed in the educational system which actually prevails, and what subjects and methods of study should be preferred, and what discontinued? they are likely to find themselves at sea without a guiding principle to find their way by. It is because I desire to offer some assistance in discovering such a principle that I have now ventured to invite your attention to the subject of Accuracy. My object in so doing is to lead you to consider and discuss some of the main objects of education, and I have thought we might do so better by confining ourselves to a single topic, than by ranging over the wide and distracting field of educational discussion. I propose first to say a few words upon accuracy itself, upon its importance as a part of man's character, and upon its importance in its application to various purposes and businesses of life; then to point out to you some of the helps and some of the hindrances to its acquisition, and so to endeavour to ascertain the studies and the methods of study which are most likely to produce it. Do not so far misunderstand me, however, as to suppose that I claim for accuracy the highest place among the qualities which may be developed and improved by education. I select it, partly because I think it is

one which is less sought after than it ought to be; but chiefly because it will enable me to try whether it is possible to set the question of education before you in a somewhat new light, and to suggest a mode of testing the value of particular studies with reference to their fitness to produce particular qualities, which may be equally applicable to other cases.

I need not, I suppose, begin by defining accuracy. The word is sufficiently familiar to you all. I will only say that it is a quality both of the intellect and of the senses, perhaps I may add of the moral nature also. We may speak of the accuracy of a man's judgment and of his memory, just as we may of the accuracy of his sight or of his hearing. I am not sure that it would be incorrect to speak of the accuracy of his affections; at all events, the common expression that such a man's heart is in the right place comes somewhat near to the same idea. What is, however, more important for us to remark is, that accuracy is not a mere natural gift, but is more or less an acquired quality, and that although it is given to some by nature in larger measure than it is to others, yet that education has in almost every case more to do with its development than nature. Take the common instance of the sight. Observe a new-born infant. He has no power whatever of judging of distances. The moon seems as much within his reach as the candle. Gradually he begins to teach himself to measure space by his eye. He learns what objects he can reach, and

what he cannot. As he grows older he learns more and more to judge of distance and of size by the eye, and this kind of education goes on more or less through his life. Thus you will find that those who take pains to cultivate this faculty attain to a degree of accuracy in judging by sight which is surprising to those who have taken no such pains. A grazier will judge the weight of a bullock, a timber-dealer will take the measure of a tree, a surveyor will estimate the size of a field by eye alone, and in many cases with perfect correctness. And we find that the power of doing this is one which we all possess, only that it is not called out by our education. Our Volunteers, for instance, have lately found that it is perfectly possible even for men advanced in life to learn to judge distances; and there is no doubt that we might, by taking pains, acquire a very much higher degree of accuracy of sight than we most of us possess. The same is the case with the other senses; the ear, the taste, the smell, may be almost indefinitely improved by proper cultivation, and may be made to convey much more accurate impressions to our minds than they do. It is familiar to us that the blind have what we call an acuter sense of hearing and of feeling, and the deaf an acuter sight, than those who are in possession of all their senses. This is not because they have by nature a more perfect organisation than others; but because, under the pressure of necessity, they take greater pains to use and make the most of the organ-

isation which they have. The Red Indian tracks his friend or his enemy by the same senses as those which we have in common with him, but which he has cultivated, and by dint of cultivation has brought to a far higher pitch of accuracy than his civilised brethren have attained. Those who have seen how a hare-hunting farmer can prick a hare, will have no difficulty in believing that even a white man might have learnt to follow a trail.

Now these remarks upon the accuracy of the senses have an important bearing on the question of mental accuracy. Some of our mental powers may almost be called mental senses. The power of observation is little else than the power of making a right use of the senses of the body. The power of memory is a kind of sense. And what I have already said as to the possibility of improving the bodily senses by education, may be said also of the possibility of improving the powers of observation and of memory. Few people observe as accurately as they might, and many observe very inaccurately indeed. But accuracy of observation may be cultivated. Perhaps you remember the story which the celebrated conjurer, Robert Houdin, tells of his method of cultivating his power of observation. He would walk rapidly by a shop window with his son, and when they had passed by they would try to recall the various things they had seen in the window, and the positions in which they were placed; after doing which they would return to

the window and see how far they were right. In this manner he acquired an extraordinary power of rapid and accurate observation, which was of great use to him in his calling. But this is an instance of rapid rather than of accurate observation. For instances of the mode in which accurate observation may be cultivated, you must go rather to the lives of men who have made themselves eminent in science, and from them you will learn not only how accuracy of observation is the foundation of the philosopher's character, and how it leads to the great discoveries which from time to time burst upon the world, but also how it is capable of development and improvement by dint of application.

I spoke just now of the importance of accuracy as an element of character. There are some to whom it may seem a trivial matter, and even as a symptom of inferior genius. Nothing is more common than a sneer at the accurate man, as though he were deficient in the higher qualities of the mind, and as though his accuracy were but the plodding effort of mediocrity to make up for the want of the creative and imaginative faculty. Nor, on the other hand, is it unusual to hear those who lay claim to what they call the higher gifts speak lightly and carelessly of their own want of accuracy as of a matter of no importance. I do not for a moment dispute that the exaggeration of accuracy may indicate feebleness of mind; that when a man finds himself deficient in original power he is

apt to try to cover his defects by a minute and wearisome show of accuracy in trifles. But the highest object to the pursuit of which a man can devote himself is truth; and it would be easy to show that truth can only be attained by the aid of accuracy, and that in the absence of this quality the most brilliant powers and the most unintermitting labour may not only be of no avail, but may actually lead us astray in our pursuit. In order to attain truth we must, in the first place, observe accurately; and we must, in the second place, reason accurately from what we have observed; and in order to convey the truth to others, we must be able to express accurately the conclusions to which we ourselves have come. Thus accuracy of observation, of reasoning, and of expression, are the three great points at which we have to aim; and it may not unreasonably be contended that, in considering the education which we should provide for our children, we ought to require that it should be of such a character as to conduce to the attainment of these three phases of accuracy, if I may be allowed the use of such an expression.

How, then, does the education, which in fact we give, answer to that description? I fear we must reply, Very imperfectly indeed. Take first the question of observation. Can we say that we educate our children in any class of schools so as to develop their powers of observation? It is obvious that in one great division of human knowledge, at all

events, and that the one which offers the most extended field for observing, we give, as a rule, no education at all. There are no schools, or next to none, in which natural science is systematically taught, or even taught at all. The idea of teaching natural science has scarcely as yet got a footing in the English mind. Schoolmasters and parents are alike slow to admit it. What is the consequence? The majority of children have by nature what we call a turn for observing what goes on around them. Frequently they will themselves ask questions as to the meaning and causes of natural phenomena—"What makes the fire burn?" "Where does the rain come from?" "Why is it colder in winter than in summer?" and so forth. Almost invariably, when the attempt to teach them is made, they are found ready and able to learn the principles of the natural sciences. Yet they grow up in profound ignorance of them. Their questions are too commonly put off with shallow and inaccurate answers, or are stopped by a rebuff, because the parent or the teacher is himself unable to answer them. At all events, the desultory information which he gives in such replies as he may make to occasional questions is not systematised or made a part of the child's education; and the child, finding how little interest his elders take in the matter, soon loses his own. Thus the great mass of our population grow up with little or no knowledge of natural phenomena, and, what is worse, with minds so untrained that they have not

the power of acquiring that knowledge. Hear what Professor Faraday says on this subject:—

"I am an officer of the Trinity House, and have occasion to see there how difficult it is to get men of ordinary intelligence prepared by instruction with regard to anything that is out of the very ordinary way. In the mere attendance on a common lamp, and the observance of the proceedings required for its security, or the attempt to make notes of what they ought to observe, of which they have tables drawn with much care, a great degree of ignorance is continually manifested. . . . I have had occasion to go over to France with a Trinity deputation to look at their lighthouses, and we find intelligent men there such as we cannot get here. In regard to the electric light, which you may have heard of, we have had to displace keeper after keeper, for the purpose of obtaining such as could attend to it intelligently, and who could do what they were bidden." The men of whom he is speaking are the ordinary workmen. "The keeper has probably 25s. a-week, and a house and firing given him: the fair and ordinary workmen such as in France we find with far less pay. At the lighthouses there we find intelligent men, able to give a reason, able to supply a correction, or to act for themselves if they see action is wanted."

These defects are due, in Professor Faraday's opinion, to the want of that kind of education which would bring out a man's powers of observation. He does not complain that he cannot find men competent to manage the electric light, but that he cannot find men who can learn to manage it; and the reason he cannot find them is, because there are so few who have been trained when young to exercise their faculties of

observation upon natural objects. But perhaps you may suppose that he means to say these men have not been educated at all, that they are mere clods whose minds have never been broken up by any kind of cultivation, and that it is on that account that they are unable to learn what he wishes to teach them. It is a favourite doctrine that education, more particularly what is called a liberal education, if it teaches little that is directly and immediately useful, does, nevertheless, so strengthen and improve the mind, that it gives a man the power of learning whatever he pleases. But Professor Faraday is not less severe upon the highly educated than he is upon the less educated classes:—

"It is the highly educated man," he says, "that we find coming to us again and again, and asking the most simple question in chemistry and mathematics; and when we speak of such things as the conservation of force, the permanency of matter, and the unchangeability of the laws of nature, they are far from comprehending them, though they have relation to us in every action of our lives. Many of these instructed persons are as far from having the power of judging of those things as if their minds had never been trained." He goes on to trace the consequence. "Up to this very day there come to me persons of good education, men and women quite fit for all that you expect from education; they come to me and they talk to me about things that belong to natural science—about mesmerism, table-turning, flying through the air, about the laws of gravity—they come to me to ask me questions, and they insist against me, who think I know a little of these laws, that I am wrong and they are right, in a manner which

shows how little the ordinary course of education has taught such minds. . . . I do not wonder at those who have not been educated at all; but . . . persons who have been fully educated according to the present system come with the same propositions as the untaught, and stronger ones, because they have a stronger conviction that they are right. They are ignorant of their ignorance at the end of all that education."

There can, I think, be no doubt that these remarks of Professor Faraday's involve matter for deep consideration. He may or may not be right in saying that table-turning and the other processes of which he speaks are contrary to the laws of nature, and impossible. That is not the question. The question is, whether a system of education can be regarded as satisfactory which omits to strengthen the mind by teaching it to observe and to reason accurately, and leaves it a prey to delusions which it has not the power, because it has never acquired the habit, of investigating? Accurate work of every kind, accurate observation, accurate reasoning, involves labour, and the mind which is untrained shrinks from that labour, and prefers to acquiesce in the show of accuracy on the part of another rather than go through the labour of investigation for itself. This it is which gives fallacious statistics such dangerous power. This it is which causes so many to fall before the specious reasoning of the sceptic who disputes the truths of revelation. The show of accuracy dazzles the inaccurate. What Pope says of learning may be applied here—a

little knowledge is dangerous. A man who is unaccustomed to observe accurately for himself does not detect the inaccuracies in the statements and reasonings presented to him by others. Perhaps I ought rather to say the inaccuracies of the statements, for there is a difference between accuracy of statement and accuracy of reasoning, and it is not a little curious to find that men may be most accurate and acute reasoners, and most slovenly and inaccurate observers. Professor Faraday expressly mentions that some of those who come to him and maintain absurd and impossible doctrines in matters of natural philosophy are excellent mathematicians. A mathematician has learnt to reason, but he has not learned to observe. He is in the habit of taking his premisses for granted, and looking only to the deductions from them; and it appears that he is capable of testing every link in his chain of deductions very accurately, and yet may be utterly astray in the premisses from which he is drawing them. The same is the case with the logician. He is taught the process of reasoning, and he is taught it without reference to the truth or falsehood of the subject-matter to which it is applied. The consequence is, that the logician often goes very wrong indeed. By far the subtlest and most ingenious logicians the world has ever seen were the Schoolmen, and they were at the same time the men who advanced and who defended the most absurd doctrines. It was said of them that they were like the astronomers "which did feign eccentrics and epicycles, and such

engines of orbs, to save the phenomena, though they knew there were no such things." In like manner it was said that the Schoolmen were always ready to feign what was necessary to support the doctrines they wished to maintain; and such was the ingenuity of their superstructures that men were prevented attending to the unsoundness of their foundations.

Bacon was the great enemy of these men. It was he who introduced a sounder system of reasoning—a system founded upon observation.

[Charles II. and the fish.[1]]

This inaccuracy of observation is the cause of the great distrust which many persons not unreasonably feel of statistics.

The error which misled Dr Price in the Northampton tables arose in the following way. He found that 4689 persons had died there between 1734 and 1780. The register of christenings showed fewer births than deaths. He therefore assumed that the population had been kept up by an immigration of shoemakers from twenty to thirty years of age. He omitted the Baptist children,—hence his error.

[1] Here Lord Iddesleigh drew the attention of his hearers to the story of Charles II. and the fish,—how on one occasion the monarch invited the members of the Royal Society to discuss why, in a tub brimming full of water, the introduction of a fish caused no overflow. Many reasons were given in explanation. One old Scotch *savant* remained silent, and on being appealed to, responded, "Your Majesty, I doot the fact;" and proceeded by ocular demonstration to show how groundless was the discussion.

I think it will be sufficiently obvious from what I have said, that accuracy of observation and accuracy of reasoning are two distinct qualities; and that the one may be cultivated very highly and the other quite neglected. Yet neither is of use without the other. The man who reasons correctly from faulty premisses and the man who reasons incorrectly from true premisses is equally sure to come to a false conclusion.

[Gulliver's suit of clothes.[1]]

It does not signify whether the error was in the data or the calculation. The result was the same.

Our system of education, however, provides much better for teaching us to reason than for teaching us to observe. We lay great and deserved stress upon the study of mathematics. We lay somewhat less upon that of logic. I think myself that we make not sufficient account of logic. It would be well if it were taught, not as a separate art, but in connection with every process of reasoning which we are called on to follow. Logic might be applied to the

[1] Here Lord Iddesleigh illustrated his meaning by quoting Gulliver's experience during his residence in Laputa. "Those to whom the king had intrusted me, observing how ill I was clad, ordered a tailor to come next morning and take my measure for a suit of clothes. The operator did his office after a different manner from those of his trade in Europe. He first took my altitude by a quadrant, and then with rule and compasses described the dimensions and outlines of my whole body, all which he entered upon paper; and in six days brought my clothes very ill made and quite out of shape, by happening to mistake a figure in the calculation."

study of natural science, to the study of political economy, to any study, in short, which required the exercise of reason; and were it so applied, the prejudice which many feel against it would disappear. Logic and mathematics are the great instruments for the education of the reasoning faculty, and they receive, as I have said, a fair share of attention; but we bestow far too little pains on the education of the observing faculty. The almost total exclusion of natural science from our curriculum is the most obvious proof of this. But other illustrations might be found in the imperfect way in which geography, for instance, is taught; and in the neglect of the study of drawing. Englishmen, as a rule, know very little of what is called political geography—that is to say, the geography which teaches the boundaries of States, the situation of cities, and the distribution of populations; and nothing whatever of physical geography—that is to say, the conformation of the earth, the mountain-systems and the river-systems, the distribution of races of men, animals, and plants, the isothermal lines, and so forth. Drawing, again, is regarded, or has been so till very lately, as a mere accomplishment, which may be very suitable for persons with taste and leisure, but which is of little general use. Yet there is no study which would conduce more directly to accuracy of observation than the study of drawing. I am happy to think that its value is beginning, though slowly, to be recognised.

So much, then, for the efforts made to promote accuracy of observation and of reasoning. I have still to speak of accuracy of expression.

It is to this, perhaps, that our system of education is most carefully directed. The study of language is the great study of the day; and as natural science develops the power of observation, and logic and mathematics the power of reasoning, so does the science of language develop that of expression.

But even here I am compelled to ask, Do we do as much as we ought to produce accuracy? and I am compelled to answer that I find room for great improvement in this respect.

Accuracy of expression is of the highest importance. Language, whether spoken or written, is the medium by which we convey our thoughts to the minds of others. It is the engine by which we exercise influence over our fellow-men. It is of importance that we should have a perfect command over that engine, and should accustom ourselves to use it aright. We desire to speak and to write elegantly and powerfully; but it is of even greater importance that we should do so accurately. Now there is no doubt that the study of grammar, not only in the dry bones of a syntax but in the living structure of a well-written book, is of high value to us in this respect. A man who has not received a literary education can hardly be expected to obtain the command of words, the power of choosing good expressions, and of putting

his thoughts into appropriate words, which the classical scholar ought to derive from his study of language. The study of language, and of the classical languages particularly, is most useful in this respect. It is not the only reason for making that study so prominent as we do, but it is one reason. Yet in point of fact, though so large a part of the season of youth is spent in the study of language as to exclude other studies of very high importance, such as natural science, it is found that a very large number of educated persons fail after all to acquire that command of language to which so much has been sacrificed. Comparatively few either speak or write grammatically. Very many speak and write, not only ungrammatically, but confusedly and unintelligibly. We have often to supply the defects in a man's words by a reference to his meaning as gathered from the context, or from his action, or his emphasis, or from what we know of the circumstances under which he is speaking; and people expect this at our hands. A man is generally very indignant if you take him to task upon the literal construction of his words, and tells you that it is enough that you know his meaning. Of course, the sort of critical hyper-accuracy which is continually taking exception upon trifles and evading what is really important, is both irritating and contemptible; but it does not follow that because the comments of the listener are sometimes out of place, it is therefore unnecessary for the

speaker to be minutely accurate. Those who indulge in looseness and inaccuracy of expression are seldom very precise in thought. Inaccuracy arises in many cases from unwillingness to encounter the labour of working out an idea. We are content to throw it out in the rough, and to leave the trouble of shaping it to others. It is said that Englishmen are peculiarly deficient in accuracy of expression. They are certainly less precise than the French. You will not find in France the slovenly pronunciation or the ungrammatical sentences which we are noted for. More pains are taken there to acquire a pure and a correct style, and to avoid equivocal and confused language. It would be well if greater efforts were made in this direction among ourselves.

But grammatical accuracy is not the only kind at which we ought to aim. It is of far more importance that we should learn to avoid exaggeration, misstatement, and the other substantial inaccuracies, if I may use the phrase, to which we are only too prone. As accuracy is an element of truth, so are these, its opposites, elements of falsehood. Their forms are infinite, and I cannot attempt to describe them all. I will only say that the harm which we may do to our moral nature by allowing ourselves in them may be very serious. Truth is the great mark at which we ought to aim in all things—truth in thought, truth in expression, truth in work. Those who habitually sacrifice truth in small things will find it diffi-

cult to pay her the respect they should do in great things.

Now, as I found fault just now with the defectiveness in our system of education, so far as relates to the teaching of observation, I must find fault with it likewise as relates to the teaching of expression. In the former case my complaint was that we omit the studies by which observation should be taught; in the latter case I complain not that we omit the proper studies, but that we do not pursue them aright. Our great fault in what we do teach consists, I think, in our failing to make boys learn aright. We do not teach them accurately or expect them to learn accurately; the consequence is, that a great deal of time and labour is thrown away both by teacher and scholar. The boys at our great public schools are taught Latin and Greek almost exclusively for five or six years, or, including the time they spend at private schools, for eight or ten years; and a good many of them leave school knowing next to nothing of the one or the other.

How is this? Because, from some defects in the school arrangements, which I cannot now enter into, they have been allowed to learn inaccurately. They are not inspired with any love of accuracy; they learn to think it sufficient if they can come near enough to pass muster when they are examined. They do not find superior accuracy sufficiently valued to make it worth their while to go through the labour it in-

volves. Take the case, for instance, of learning by heart. Boys at some schools are required to learn an immense quantity of Latin and Greek by heart—far more, indeed, than many of them could do without injury if they did it thoroughly. But they do not do it thoroughly; they scamp it. They know that they will only be required to say a small portion of what they have been set to learn, and they content themselves with ingenious devices for guessing the part in which they will be set on, and learning that. Many boys would think that to learn the whole lesson thoroughly well was as absurd an expenditure of enthusiasm as the conduct of the actor who dyed himself all over to play Othello, when it would have been sufficient to black his face and his hands. The same spirit runs through too much of the work of schools, and masters do too little to check its growth. A master is often too well pleased when a boy gives a fair approximate answer to go deeply into the question how far that answer is supported by adequate knowledge.

[Hawtrey on Bios.[1]]

These things are trifles, but they are the trifles which form habits of mind.

It is of importance that in any reform of education we should aim at the introduction of such methods of

[1] Here the lecturer referred to some experience of Dr Hawtrey's with a scholar who confused the two meanings of the Greek word Bios, *bow* and *life*.

teaching as may discourage inaccurate learning. It is of far less consequence what boys learn than how they learn.

An interesting question of detail has been raised by Mr Halford Vaughan, which has some bearing upon the principles that should guide us in teaching languages. He thinks we teach too many languages at once, and that it would be far better to teach one first and then proceed to another. In this way he thinks that we might teach one more thoroughly than we now teach any, and that we might make room for other studies, such as that of natural science, without unduly encroaching upon the time and strength of the pupil. "The variety of discipline," he says, "bestowed by the study of language, is effected through the various efforts of mind which are naturally made in the prosecution of such a study, and not through the various languages which are learnt." He argues, therefore, that to employ these efforts upon several languages at once gives no more training than to employ them upon a single language, and that the time spent in learning two or three at once greatly retards the progress of the student. For—

"In proportion as the knowledge of a single language approaches to perfection will the variety of discipline conferred by the study of it have increased. Each new stage in the course of instruction in a language introduces some new exercise of the mind, and so imparts some new kind of discipline. . . . The imperfect knowledge of a second and a

third language will never have supplied the defect in discipline occasioned by the imperfect knowledge of the first. . . . But although the study of two languages concurrently will not have doubled the discipline bestowed by one, it will have required nearly twice as much time. . . . It will follow, therefore, that by the pursuit of several languages concurrently instead of one alone, we diminish the amount of mental discipline for which one would have given us opportunities in the same length of time."

I do not intend to enter upon the question whether Mr Vaughan is right or not in this view. There is a good deal to be said on the other side also. But what I desire is, to see those who are dealing with the subject of Educational Reform take such questions as this which he has raised into consideration. Our position at present is this: We follow a system of education which almost entirely excludes the study of natural science, and which pursues the study of several languages together. That may be a good system or it may not; but we ought to be able to make up our minds whether it is good or whether it is not good —whether it requires amendment or whether it does not. And in order to make up our minds, we ought to endeavour to ascertain what is the bearing of this system, and what would probably be the bearing of any other system, upon the formation of character and upon the discipline of the mind. Such a momentous question as that of the education of our youth ought not to be disposed of on light and trivial, or on mean and sordid grounds. There are some who would ad-

here without alteration to the existing system, simply because it exists, and it would be troublesome to change it. There are some who would revolutionise it for the sake of making it bear more directly upon the immediately worldly interests of the boys, and who would sacrifice classical training for the sake of teaching what is likely to be useful, as they say, to a boy going into business. I have been endeavouring to supply, or rather to suggest, a different test. I wish you to take the qualities which you most desire to cultivate in your sons, and to inquire what kind of education is most likely to produce those qualities. I have taken as a specimen the quality of accuracy; and I have attempted to prove, first, that this is a quality which may be imparted, or at all events greatly developed, by education; next, that it is one in which we are more deficient than we ought to be; and thirdly, that there are improvements to be made in our system of education which would tend greatly to supply the deficiency. I have argued that we should do more than we now do to cultivate the faculty of observation, by making natural science a branch of ordinary education; that we might improve our cultivation of the reasoning faculty by bringing logic into greater prominence and teaching it in connection with other studies; and that the methods we employ in cultivating the faculty of expression fall far short of the end to which they ought to lead us, and require careful revision. I began by saying that I did not claim for

accuracy the highest place in the order of mental qualities. I own I do not know of many that are of more importance; but it is unnecessary that I should exalt it above the rest. What I ask you to do is to apply the same process as that which I have gone through to the case of other qualities, and to inquire in respect of those which you desire to cultivate, —first, whether they can be imparted or improved by education; next, what are the branches of education by which they may be improved; and, finally, whether any modifications in our existing course of studies are required in order to their improvement.

Let me now, leaving the question of direct education, say a few words on what may be called the indirect education of the present day—I mean the system of public examinations. Does that system conduce to accuracy or does it not? I think there is little doubt that if properly conducted it ought to do so. But it is a powerful engine which, if indiscreetly used, may do as much harm as it is capable, in wise hands, of doing good. Some kind of examination is essential to accurate learning. No man or boy can be sure that he has learnt anything correctly unless he tries to reproduce his knowledge. At the very least he must examine himself; but self-examination is difficult and precarious—he may easily deceive himself. He ought, then, to be examined by another, and by some one whom he cannot so easily deceive. But the art of examining is not so easy as one might fancy.

To find out the depths of another person's knowledge is far more difficult than to find out its superficial extent. Hence examinations have a tendency to run into the dangerous error of encouraging a display of a large amount of superficial knowledge. This leads to cramming, which may be defined as the getting together a quantity of superficial knowledge for the purpose of display. I am not disposed to be quite so severe upon cramming as some persons are. To have the power of getting up a subject, even superficially, in a short time, is very useful. It shows no small power of mind, and it may be taken as a proof of a kind of readiness which is likely to be often called into play. I remember some years ago examining an officer in charge of a large Government department on the subject of the new system of appointment by competitive examination. He told me that a young man had recently gained an appointment in his office by an excellent paper on political economy; that he had been so struck with it that he had asked him where he had studied the subject, and was rather startled to find that all the knowledge he possessed had been crammed up in the course of about a month for that particular examination. He added, however, that though the young man probably soon forgot what he had thus hastily got together, he proved a remarkably good and able clerk. The power of cramming showed power of mind, which, when directed to other tasks, was able to accomplish them. But while I mention

this instance, in order to show that the fact that a man may carry a competitive examination by cram is no sufficient reason for condemning competitive examinations for the selection of candidates for public employment, I am not insensible to the evils which attend the habit of cramming, and I am alive to the dangers which may result from examinations which have a tendency to encourage it.

I am happy to perceive that the examinations which are now extending themselves throughout the country are conducted upon a sound and careful principle. The University examinations, in particular, are directed to discover how far the young men and boys who present themselves are well grounded in the rudiments and elements of knowledge. They have brought to light, as our Public Schools Commission brought to light in another way, great defects in this important particular. It is satisfactory to observe that as they proceed an improvement is taking place; greater accuracy of knowledge is reported; and the latest report from the University of Oxford speaks of slow but steady improvement in the quality of the work done: "The arithmetic, it is quite clear, is really and considerably better than at first." Of grammar they speak less commendingly: "The work is evidently still far below what it ought to be; and enough attention is not paid to the groundwork. The delegates are anxious that the schools should see the necessity of doing their utmost in this direction."

If we are not doing all that we ought to do, we are at least becoming aware of our defects.

I would call to your notice the attention paid in the National Schools to the three elementary subjects; and the prominence given to the spelling and arithmetic test in the Civil Service examination.

There is one point upon which the advocates of educational reform may seem to be inconsistent. They urge at once the importance of greater accuracy in the elementary teaching of languages, and that of the extension of the curriculum by the admission into it of a greater number of studies. There are those who advocate reform by deepening, and those who advocate it by widening, education. We do both, and we think we are justified. We desire to see the "ologies," as they are contemptuously termed, made instruments of education, not because we think it desirable that men should know a little of everything, but because we believe that there are powers of mind which ought to be developed, and which can best be developed by studies of that kind. We desire to rescue the natural sciences from the position of being made playthings of. We desire to do away with the rivalry which may be engendered between the man educated in science and the man educated in letters. We desire to harmonise the education of the country and of all classes in the country. Look how Professor Faraday, the scientific man who has not had a classical education, speaks contemptuously of the classically

educated man; and compare him with Dr Moberly, the classical scholar, whose idea of teaching boys natural science is summed up thus: "You may teach them these things, and they will profit by them much as ladies do. They remember that there was a good deal to be said about the subject, but they forget what it was." These two men are like Touchwood and Cargill in 'St Ronan's Well.' Now, do we wish to expose our literary men, our classically educated men, to the sort of uneven contest which they will have to wage with the man of science, if they are to gather all their ideas of science and the actual world in which they live from classical studies?

[Heraldic Lions.[1]]

Do we think it socially or politically desirable to draw a broad line between the education which is to be given to the two classes, the class which desires and appreciates literary culture, and the class which desires and will insist on having scientific culture? Why should we have an Athens party and a Chicago party? Why should not the classical student learn something about Chicago, and the modern student something about Athens?

Let me return to my text. What is the cause of by far the greater part of our differences and dis-

[1] Guillim, in his treatise on Heraldry, gives a very full description of heraldic lions, but we should hardly expect a student to obtain a sufficient knowledge of the natural history of lions from books on heraldry.

putes? Want of accuracy. Want of an accurate knowledge of what we mean ourselves and of what others mean. But to know accurately what others mean, we must make ourselves acquainted with their modes of thinking; we must study their studies, and must learn to think and speak as they do. Hasty, and one-sided, and inaccurate views of the position of our opponents, encountered on their side by equally hasty, one-sided, and inaccurate views of us, lead to misunderstandings which a better acquaintance would have obviated. In a full half of our disputes we are fighting not the opinions of our opponents, but our own exaggerated views of those opinions. We make the giants first, and then we kill them. Such misunderstandings are to be deplored when they are the result of imperfect education and imperfect sympathies: they are to be condemned when they are, as is sometimes the case, the result of wilful exaggeration or careless indifference to truth. Accuracy, and its sister virtues of candour and fairness, is a bad instrument of party warfare, and we are much tempted in public life to deviate from it, and, whether consciously or unconsciously, to misstate and misrepresent the arguments we desire to combat. Those who once allow themselves in this practice find it difficult to check themselves. It is at least desirable that we should not add to the danger by divergent education.

Thus far I have dwelt mainly on the mode in which education may be made conducive to accuracy: let

me, in conclusion, say a parting word in commendation of accuracy itself. For I need not point out to you that if it be a virtue of so great excellence as I suppose it, we are all of us bound in our daily life to strive to attain to it. And first, I would ask you, Does not Nature herself point out to us how good a thing it is, by the pleasure which the consciousness of it awakens in our minds? However we may profess to undervalue it, yet when we have executed some work, be it of the hand or of the brain, and find that it fits in all its parts, and that it fits its place, we feel a certain satisfaction, which is nothing else than a testimony borne by our inner selves to the excellence of accuracy. On the other hand, consider how an inaccurate person provokes us, how we long to correct his mistakes, how tiresome we think him, when by some incorrect statement he misleads us, and gives us the trouble of following up a wild-goose chase, or of setting to work to rectify the consequences of his blunder. Even in trifling matters we upon the whole prefer the accurate man: the man who can tell his story correctly, with the right names and the right facts, is a far pleasanter man to listen to than our friend who mixes up facts and confuses names, and forgets the point of half his anecdotes. True, an accurate man may be a bore, if he overdoes us with his accuracy; but an inaccurate man may be, and often is, at least as great a bore, with the additional disadvantage of being less useful. But true accuracy is

something quite distinct from tedious minuteness. A man with accurate conceptions will not be tediously minute; he will see what are the important salient points on which he is to dwell, and what are to be slurred over and kept in the background. Mr Ruskin, the great champion of accuracy in painting, does not require that the painter should show every leaf on every tree, at whatever distance: he only demands that when he paints a tree or a leaf, he should paint it truly—that it should be an oak, or an elm, or some other particular tree—not a tree in the abstract. So, in telling a story, the accurate man gains the advantage of being more picturesque, more lifelike, than his inaccurate companion. The accurate man treads firmly, and gives names and places with confidence, while the inaccurate man must either wash out half the merit of his story by suppressing all individuality in it, or must expose himself to the risk of correction, by inventing names to fit his story.

So much for the amenities of accuracy.

[Accuracy in domestic matters, &c.[1]]

Is accuracy incompatible with genius? Far from it. There have, no doubt, been men of true genius who have been very inaccurate; and men who know them-

[1] Here the lecturer referred to the value of punctuality in domestic matters, viewing it as another form of accuracy, and illustrated the benefits of accuracy in note-writing and in repeating stories and messages, by the examples of Morrison's note and Mr James's powders, but these illustrations are not in the manuscript.

selves to be inaccurate are fond of maintaining that as there may be genius without accuracy, therefore accuracy is a sign of want of genius. In truth, this is only a specimen of their own inaccurate mode of reasoning. True genius is, for the most part, accurate; not always accurate in trifles, but commonly accurate in those matters on which it exercises itself. Where accuracy in these is wanting, it is a fact that somewhat derogates from the splendour of the genius which is deficient in them. But even in small matters men of genius are often most accurate. I say small matters rather than trifles, because to a man of real genius that which appears a trifle to others is often perceived to be a matter of importance. I need but mention the two great names of Napoleon and Wellington, in support of my assertion. No two men of modern days have had larger views, greater minds, more acknowledged genius, than these; and no two men have ever been more keenly alive to the importance of scrupulous accuracy. Napoleon, it is true, was often tempted to suppress or to distort the truth in his public declarations; but this was not from any doubt of the value of accuracy: it was from mistaken notions of policy. We must not confound careless inaccuracy with deliberate fabrication or suppression.

But we have a higher testimony than that of man to the perfect compatibility which exists between accuracy and greatness, in the works of nature which are spread around us. The Creator has wrought and

still works among us on the mightiest scale and with the most perfect finish. No eye has fathomed, no mind has conceived, the mighty abyss of the universe; no microscope has found a flaw in the minutest atom of which it is composed. If for a time man has believed that he had found an incongruity, further research has only shown that the fault was in his own limited perceptions, and that a more complete acquaintance with the great laws of nature could but establish their perfect harmony.

We live in a world of which it were well that we knew more. Of this we may feel assured—that the more we know, the more shall we learn to reverence the Almighty Power, by whose Hand all things were made, and by whom they are still maintained in that completeness in every part which Omnipotence alone can give, but which it is for us in our measure humbly and reverently, but diligently, to strive after.

IV.

DESULTORY READING.

ADDRESS

DELIVERED TO THE

STUDENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH,

NOVEMBER 3, 1885.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE was elected as Lord Rector of the Edinburgh University on the 7th November 1883, by a majority of fifty-two over Sir George Trevelyan, M.P. Sir Stafford Northcote delivered his Inaugural Address at Edinburgh on the 31st January 1884. After he had been raised to the House of Lords, Lord Iddesleigh wrote his second address, entitled "Desultory Reading." He was at this time much occupied in London attending Cabinets and presiding at the Commission of Inquiry into the causes of the Depression of Trade. Owing to his numerous political engagements, which required many important speeches, he had not been able to obtain a real holiday, and Lord Iddesleigh had found his one relaxation in desultory reading. This fact was the reason of his working up the address in this manner. On the 31st October, just before leaving town for Edinburgh, he spoke in behalf of Mr Baillie Cochrane's candidature at Camden Town. The 3d of November 1885 was the day on which he delivered his address, and immediately proceeded to Glasgow and West Calder, on the 4th and 5th November, for political speeches of length and importance.

WHEN I had the honour of addressing you on the occasion of my inauguration, I expressed a hope that it might be in my power to visit you again in

the course of my term of office, so that the intercourse between your Rector and the great body of students might not be limited to the single address which custom prescribed, and which has, I think, usually furnished the only opportunity for our being brought together. I expressed this hope, knowing that under any circumstances I should feel the advantage of occasionally renewing my acquaintance with the University. But since the time to which I refer, much has happened to increase, and, if I may use the phrase, to intensify, the feelings of regard and of kindly goodwill which were engendered at our first meeting. We have rejoiced together and we have sorrowed together. We rejoiced in the interesting proceedings which attended the celebration of the Tercentenary; we sorrowed at the common loss which we sustained in the death of our esteemed and distinguished friend, the late Principal. I should be wanting in all right feeling if I did not take this opportunity of again bearing my testimony to the high qualities and the eminent services of Sir Alexander Grant.

I have referred to these two links in the chain of affection which, I hope, binds us together; but there is still another matter upon which I am anxious to say a few words, and which brings us more directly to the business of this evening. Within the last two years the students of this University have done much to quicken and to develop what I may call the University life. You have felt that, in order to gain the full

advantages which these seats of learning are able to offer, it is necessary for you to adopt some methods of common action, to set on foot an organisation capable of furnishing you with the means of expressing your wants and of taking steps to supply them. It is to this movement, as I understand, that we are to attribute your coming together to-night; and I trust I am a good augur when I foretell that this meeting will be followed by many more, at which I hope you will have the benefit of valuable lectures by eminent men upon the various subjects of interest upon which they will be able to address you. It is a wise idea, and I trust it will not only deserve but command success.

And now, gentlemen, you have done me the honour to ask me to open the ball, and to deliver something in the nature of a lecture. If I had had more command of my time, and could have given to any subject which I might have selected the study which a man ought to give before he presumes to appear before the public as a lecturer, I would gladly have made the attempt. But it is not so, and I feel that I must ask your indulgence if I shrink from the inspiriting call which would bid me soar with the Dircœan swan, and content myself with a humbler imitation of the Matinian bee. Alike in the subject which I shall choose, and in the mode of handling it which I shall adopt, I shall endeavour to avoid the charge of presumption; and I therefore trust that I may disarm criticism, and escape the mortification of ill success.

I shall not attempt to tread the high paths of science, or to enter far into the domain of philosophy. Neither shall I adventure upon the more elevated regions of literature, or seek to explore the temples of the Muses. My theme will be the pleasures, the dangers, and the uses of what is commonly called desultory reading; and I hope to be allowed to decline for my address the more pretentious title of a lecture, and to describe it rather as a desultory discourse.

Not that I regard desultory reading as unworthy of philosophical examination, nor desultory study as a contradiction in terms, though some might be disposed to call it so. I can well understand that severer critics might be tempted to apply to me the line of Terence, quoted by Horace, in which the wiser slave tells his young master that love, having in itself neither reason nor judgment, cannot be treated by counsel and by argument; and that I might be told that desultory work was at best only to be tolerated, and was certainly quite unworthy of serious discussion. I dissent altogether from such a theory as that, and I shall try, before we have done, to set before you some considerations to show not only the charms, but also the utility, of the desultory method.

You are, I doubt not, familiar with the distinction between deductive and inductive reasoning. It always seems to me that the severer method of study is the more applicable to the former, and the lighter or desultory method to the latter. The continuous

reader will make the better progress in reasoning and in drawing deductions from given premisses. The desultory reader will, or may, succeed more effectually in cultivating the faculty of observation, and in collecting the materials which must form the foundation for the inductive science.

As regards the comparative pleasures and advantages of close and of desultory study, I would liken the one to a journey by railway, the other to a journey on horseback. The railway will take you more rapidly to your journey's end, and by its aid you will get over much more ground in the day. But you will lose the variety of the walk up the hill, the occasional divergence from the hard road, and the opportunities for examining the country through which you are passing, which the horseman enjoys. The business man will prefer the train, which will carry him quickly to his bank or his warehouse; but he will miss many things which the other will have seen and profited by, provided, of course, that he has made good use of his faculty of observation.

For it is upon such a proviso as this that the case of the desultory worker really turns. He must not be a loiterer, shuffling out of the trouble which his more methodical comrades put themselves to. He must have an object in view, and he must not allow himself to lose sight of it. We are not to confound desultory work with idleness.

It is useful to look to the origin of words. The

word "desultory" is of Latin parentage, and it was applied by the Romans to describe the equestrian jumping actively from one steed to another in the circus, or even (as was the case with the Numidians) in the midst of battle. That, certainly, was no idle loitering; it was energetic activity, calculated to keep the mind and the body very much alive indeed. That should be the spirit of the desultory reader. His must be no mere fingering of books without thought how they are to be turned to account. He may be wise in not allowing himself to become a book-worm; but he must take care not to become what is much worse, a book-butterfly. Whatever is worth doing is worth doing well, and it is possible so to regulate and pursue a seemingly desultory course of reading as to render it more truly beneficial than an apparently deeper and severer method of study. This world of ours is an old world, full of the works and records of many generations. We are in daily contact with the fragments of the past, with traces here and remains there which attract our attention either for their intrinsic beauty or utility, or as indications of the manners and habits of mankind in former ages. Among these records assuredly there are none which are of greater interest, or of higher value, than the records, mere fragments though they may often be, of human history and human thought which are to be found in books. The poet tells us how we may so read the great book of nature that we may find in the trees, the stones, the

running brooks, lessons which may profit as much as sermons. But while cordially accepting this teaching, we may observe that the trees and the brooks would hardly convey all these useful lessons to us if we had not a considerable knowledge of books to begin with. The lover of nature will find much revealed to him which the mere book-worm will wholly fail to notice; but, on the other hand, the well-read man who can apply the teaching of his books to the objects which he sees around him will profit far more than his illiterate companion.

I do not, however, desire to dwell on what may be considered little more than a truism. What I wish to point out to you is, that so great is the mass of our book-heritage, that it is absolutely impossible for any one, and doubly impossible for one who has other engagements in life, to make himself acquainted with the hundredth part of it. So that our choice lies for the most part between ignorance of much that we would greatly like to know, and that kind of acquaintance which is to be acquired only by desultory reading.

When I say this, I do not forget that a third alternative may be offered to us. We may be told that though we have not time to read the books themselves, we have always the means of becoming acquainted with their contents by the aid of abstracts, abridgments, and other convenient instruments for the close packing of information. Nobody is more

ready than I am to acknowledge the utility of these pieces of intellectual mechanism. They are most valuable for reference, and are often indispensable for saving time. But to regard them as equivalent to, or even as a decent substitute for, the books themselves, would be a fatal error. They serve the purpose which is served by a dictionary; and if, as Charles Lamb maintains, dictionaries are not to be reckoned as books, so neither ought these compressed masses of information to be admitted to that honourable title. I may have occasion to return to this point, and to offer a few remarks on the question of cramming; but for the moment my object is to eliminate this kind of false study from the comparison which I am anxious to draw between the sustained and the desultory methods of true study.

With regard to these two methods I would, in the first place, observe that, speaking generally, the world has need of them both. We need students who will give themselves up to strictly limited subjects of study, will pursue them with all their heart and mind and strength, and with that kind of devotion which we may call student's love. These must be men animated by the spirit of our old giants of learning, of whose powers of reading we hear so much, and of whose powers of writing we see remaining so many substantial proofs. Yet even with these men the intermixture of some general and desultory reading is necessary, both for the very purposes of their study,

and in order to relieve the strain of the mind and to keep it in a healthy condition. I never read so many novels in succession as during the months that I was working for my degree at the rate of ten or twelve hours a-day; and in the week when I was actually under examination, I read through the 'Arabian Nights' in the evenings.

I forget who the great judge was, who, being asked as to his reading, answered that he read nothing but law and novels. But there is plenty of literature besides novels, and besides the 'Arabian Nights,' which will be good for the relaxation of the mind after severe study, and I venture to think that the more miscellaneous our selection is, the more agreeable as well as the more profitable it will be.

So much for the consideration of one's own mental health. But beyond that, it is, I think, evident that a certain amount of miscellaneous reading is of great importance to the student in relation to his main study itself. Illustrations of his work will be presented to him, often from the most unexpected quarters, which will sometimes cheer and lighten his labour, and sometimes very usefully supply hints for further or wholly different lines of inquiry. As I said just now, for inductive reasoning we need a wide field, where we may pick up materials which may suggest new starting-points in the process of discovery. The student who is also something of a man of the world will often go further than the man who shuts out the

light of day that he may give himself wholly to his folio and his lamp.

"Study is like the heaven's glorious sun
That will not be deep-search'd with saucy looks:
Small have continual plodders ever won
Save base authority from others' books.
These earthly godfathers of heaven's lights
That give a name to every fixed star
Have no more profit of their shining nights
Than those that walk and wot not what they are.
Too much to know is to know nought but fame;
And every godfather can give a name."

There is a good deal of wisdom in these sarcastic lines, which Shakespeare puts into the mouth of Biron in "Love's Labour Lost." It is the wisdom of the student who is also a man of the world, and who looks suspiciously or contemptuously on

"The book-full blockhead, ignorantly read,
With loads of learned lumber in his head."

I might occupy a good deal of your time if I were to set myself to bring together all the judgments that I could find in our great literary works against the pedant. But it would be somewhat beside my mark, for there may be desultory readers who deserve the name of pedant as much or more than those cloistered toilers who are chained to the desk by the love of the study itself, who have no thought or wish to parade themselves and their acquirements before the world, or to seek for praise and admiration for their learning. Chaucer's Scholar, who

"Would lever have at his bed's head
Twenty bookes in white and red
Of Aristote and his philosophie
Than robes rich, or fidel, or sautrie,"

had not a touch of the pedant about him. Indeed I doubt whether any true lover of learning for its own sake can ever deserve that unpleasing appellation.

But, as you have often been told, "Studia abeunt in mores;" and it is with a view to give you some hints as to the effects of particular methods of study upon your habits and your characters that I am now inviting your attention to systems of reading.

In the first place, I would offer a plea in favour of desultory reading (or at least of a certain amount of it), because it leaves a man more at liberty to pursue the particular line which suits his taste and his capacity. This is, I suppose, the ground on which Dr Johnson commended the practice. "I would not advise," he says, "a rigid adherence to a particular plan of study. I myself have never persisted in any plan for two days together. A man ought to read just as inclination leads him, for what he reads as a task will do him little good."

Lord Bacon, too, in his well-known essay, tells us that there are some books to be read only in parts, others to be read but not curiously, and some few to be read wholly and with diligence and attention.

Both these high authorities, therefore, recognise the

propriety of leaving the student some latitude in his choice of books and in his method of reading.

But while this freedom is largely to be respected, it ought not to be allowed to degenerate into laxity. The tendency of a great many young men, and of old ones too for that matter, is not only to read widely, but also to read indolently; and indolent reading is as much to be discouraged as diligent reading is to be commended.

There is a fine passage in Mr Carlyle's Inaugural Address when he was chosen Rector of this University.

"We ought to cast aside altogether," he says, "the idea people have that if they are reading any book, that if an ignorant man is reading any book, he is doing rather better than nothing at all. I must entirely call that in question: I even venture to deny that. It would be much safer and better for many a reader that he had no concern with books at all. There is a number, a frightfully increasing number, of books that are decidedly, to the readers of them, not useful. But an ingenious reader will learn also that a certain number of books were written by a supremely noble kind of people,—not a very great number of books, but still a number fit to occupy all your reading industry . . . Books are like men's souls, divided into sheep and goats. Some few are going up, and carrying us up heavenward; calculated, I mean, to be of priceless advantage in teaching—in forwarding the teaching of all generations. Others, a frightful multitude, are going down, down; doing ever the more and the wider and the wilder mischief. Keep a strict eye on that latter class of books. And for the rest, in regard to all your

studies and readings here, and to whatever you may learn, you are to remember that the object is not particular knowledges—not that of getting higher and higher in technical perfections, and all that sort of thing. There is a higher aim lying at the rear of all that, especially among those who are intended for literary or speaking pursuits, or the sacred profession. You are ever to bear in mind that there lies behind that the acquisition of what may be called wisdom—viz., sound appreciation and just decision as to all the objects that come round you, and the habit of behaving with justice, candour, clear insight, and loyal adherence to fact. Great is wisdom; infinite is the value of wisdom. It cannot be exaggerated; it is the highest achievement of man. Blessed is he that getteth understanding."

You will, I think, have noticed at more than one point in this address, that your late Rector's warning was directed as much to the manner as to the matter of your reading. It is not only, perhaps it is not so much, a question of what you read, as of how you read it. Undoubtedly there are great and noble works, such as Mr Carlyle probably had in his mind, which are qualified to produce a great effect, and to lead the soul and the intellect distinctly heavenward; while there are undoubtedly some which have a directly noxious and harmful character. But the great mass of books are, like the great mass of men, a mixture of good and evil, and are neither to be blindly followed nor blindly rejected. It would but narrow the mind in the first place, and depend upon it that from narrowing to perverting is but a short step.

Hear the advice of a very wise counsellor (especially to youth), the late Dr Arnold. He says :—

"Keep your view of men and things extensive, and depend upon it that a mixed knowledge is not a superficial one. As far as it goes, the views that it gives are true; but he who reads deeply one class of writers only, gets views which are almost sure to be perverted, and which are not only narrow but false. Adjust your proposed amount of reading to your time and inclination—this is perfectly free to any man; but whether the amount be large or small, let it be varied in its kind, and widely varied. If I have a confident opinion on any one point connected with the improvement of the human mind, it is on this."

If, then, we agree that the most important question is not what, but how, we shall read, let us consider the dangers against which we must be on our guard. I have already touched upon that of indolence, even though it be busy indolence. There is another fault which we must avoid, that of misdirected energy—the energy of the unhappy student whom Mr Lowell selects as the butt of his clever satire :—

"A reading machine, ever wound up and going,
He mastered whatever was not worth the knowing."

It is to men of this sort that the old proverb applies : they cannot see the wood for the trees. They are so intent upon details that they lose all idea of the whole; and for want of grasp of the whole they lose the benefit of the very details with which they so energetically busy themselves. The remedy is not

far to seek, and I may give it as a remedy applicable to both the faults of which I have been speaking: it is, always to read with an object, and that a worthy object. Perhaps, in saying this, I may lay myself open to the charge of opposing myself to that desultory reading of which I have been rather declaring myself a defender. But it is not really so. There is no reason why a desultory reader should not be a reader with an object. He may be following up a train of thought which leads him to consult first one work and then another; he may be seeking for evidence of facts which can only be satisfactorily ascertained by collating a great number of authorities, and he may be examining many books which he only knows by name to see whether they throw any light upon the subject of his researches. Not improbably, while he is reading with such a purpose as that, and is looking a little below the surface of what he reads, he will, as it were, stumble on quite unexpected discoveries, such as the pedantic student, who has devoted himself to the closest reading of which a machine is capable, would never by possibility have made. Lord Beaconsfield's favourite saying that adventures are for the adventurous, applies to the literary adventurer at least as much as to any other. Or, again, you may be reading with a view to discover the full meaning of an author who has obtained celebrity, and who has exercised an important influence over the minds of men; or you may be studying mere style

and power of expression. Or you may be comparing the author's writings with what is known of the author's life. In short, there are endless objects which you may be pursuing while you seem to be aimlessly turning over the leaves of one book after another, and to be wasting time which you are in fact employing most profitably as well as most diligently.

But there is yet an object with which a man may read, and with regard to which it is desirable that I should say a few words, because it connects itself with some very practical questions of the day. A man may read hard in order to "get up," as it is called, some particular subject or subjects for an examination. In short, he may give himself up to be crammed. And cramming has now a very different significance from that which attached to the same process before the days of competitive examinations.

In old times a man would cram in order to get admiration. Probably the less he knew the more he desired the reputation of knowledge, and in order to gain that reputation, he was likely to try all manner of short cuts to it.

Have you ever read the amusing account which Seneca gives of a wealthy man of this class—Calvisius Sabinus? This worthy had a large family of slaves and freedmen, and he was troubled with a short memory—so short, indeed, that he would confuse Achilles with Ulysses, and hopelessly forget Priam.

Still he desired to appear learned, and he had the wit to discover a means. He laid out a large sum in the purchase of slaves, one of whom knew Homer from beginning to end, another Hesiod equally well, and nine others who were thoroughly acquainted with as many great lyric poets; or when he could not buy them ready-made, he bought the slaves and had them trained; and when once he had got his forces in order, he took to worrying his friends, and making their supper miserable by turning the conversation into channels which enabled him to show off his learning; for, as he justly argued, learning which he had bought and paid for at so high a price assuredly was his own.

Such was cramming in the days of the Roman empire. In our own day it is not quite the same in form, though perhaps there may be more resemblance in substance between the crammer and the crib on the one side, and the learned freedmen on the other, than we should at first be inclined to admit. But it would be unjust to deny that, given the necessity of preparing for an examination, upon the results of which the whole career of a young man probably depends, it is natural, I may almost say it is inevitable, that special preparation should be made, and that preparation should take the form of a rapid storage of the memory with as many salient pieces of knowledge as possible, due regard being had not to the education of the mind of the student, but to his being prepared

to gain the largest number of marks in the shortest time.

I do not desire now to enter into the great question of the competitive examinations. It is one on both sides of which there is a great deal to be said, and I am far too sensible of the advantages of the system to use hasty words of a depreciatory character. But this I wish to impress upon you, that regarding the matter from an educational point of view, we cannot but say that learning is too sensitive to be successfully wooed by so rough and so unskilful a process; and that it is only for those who approach her in a reverent and loving spirit, and by the regular paths of patient and careful study, that she will open the portals of her abode and admit the student to her heart. It is with her votaries, as with those of the Leaf in Chaucer's beautiful poem:—

> "Knightes ever should be persevering,
> To seeke honour without feintise or slouth,
> Fro wele to better in all manner thing.
> In signe of which with leaves aye lasting
> They be rewarded after their degree,
> Whose lusty green may not appaired be."

But though learning is not to be won by short cuts or royal roads, yet, as the philosopher's stone could turn whatever it touched into gold, so the true lover of literature can, by the alchemy of a sympathetic mind, find the true gold of the intellect in the works to which he applies himself. Recall to yourselves, for

example, that well-known epistle in which Horace draws forth the lessons of Homer's great poems, in which, as he says, the poet teaches the secrets of human life and traces the springs of human action more fully and more excellently than either Chrysippus or Crantor. Or, again, take Wordsworth's beautiful lines on the divinities which the lively Grecian's fancy could find in his land of hills, rivers, and fertile fields and sounding shores. These are but samples of the thousand ways in which the true poetic fancy will detect beauties or lessons which, to a less observant eye, would be invisible.

Or, leaving the realm of fancy, how many unexpected lights upon questions of history or philosophy will reveal to the practised and attentive reader truths and evidences which are all the more striking because they are unconsciously disclosed! Take, for instance, that curious little article (shall I call it?) of Lucian's upon the pseudo-mantis, the charlatan Alexander, whose tricks and devices he exposes, and whose success in imposing upon the credulous he details. Observe how, quite casually, he remarks that his hero was able to deceive all classes of philosophers except only two sects—the Epicureans and the Christians. He merely mentions the fact, so far as concerns the Christians; but how suggestive a fact it is! The Epicurean, who disputed the intervention of the gods in human affairs altogether, might naturally be supposed to be incredulous and proof against superstitious

pretensions; but with the Christian it might have been thought that the very reverse was likely to be the case, and in truth his rejection of the wondrous displays of the deceiver would be due not to scepticism as to spiritual manifestations, but more probably to his belief that these things were of the works of the evil one, and were to be put away as abominable.

But why should I detain you with illustrations of what every reader must soon discover for himself, that the wisdom, the graces, the soul and spirit of a book are as nothing until to that book be applied a mind and an intelligence capable of drawing forth those charms, which to inferior or less sympathetic spirits are revealed, if at all, in an inferior degree, and of which we properly say that they are *φωνᾶντα συνετοῖσιν*?

Perhaps there is nothing more noticeable than the treatment which a work of humour, or it may be of fancy, receives at the hands of those who are themselves destitute of those qualities. You Scotchmen are often twitted with want of power to perceive a joke—you, the countrymen of Scott and Burns, and of that galaxy of wits who made the society of Edinburgh so famous in days not long gone by! But I am not going to take an illustration from Scotland. I will call into court an Englishman, whose memoirs we are all fond of dipping into at our idlest hours, and never without amusement, and yet whose absolute

deficiency in these particulars is unspeakably delightful. Mr Samuel Pepys seems to be wholly wanting in all sense of the ridiculous, and to be equally devoid of any spark of fancy. Here is his estimate of the highest, gayest, loveliest piece of fancy in the world: "To the King's Theatre, where we saw 'Midsummer Night's Dream,' which I had never seen before, nor shall ever again, for it is the most insipid, ridiculous play that ever I saw in my life."

We must not, however, confine our attention to works of humour or of fancy alone. They are, indeed, most valuable in the development, perhaps even in the formation, of character, and we cannot but admire and feel grateful for the lessons which they teach us. But they would pall upon us if we sought to make them our sole companions. As Mr Lowell says of new books—

> "For reading new books is like eating new bread:
> One can bear it at first, but by gradual steps he
> Is brought to death's door by a mental dyspepsy."

So it may be said of books of the lighter class that they would not furnish the mind with the food it requires if our reading were confined to them alone.

What, then, ought the young to read? It is indeed a grave and serious question; but I am not going to attempt to answer it by prescribing a detailed regimen or course of study. That I must leave to be decided upon according to the circumstances of the student, the profession which he is about to follow, and the

advice which his tutors or professors may give him. If his training is to be mainly scientific, then I should say that it is peculiarly desirable that his reading should be mixed and miscellaneous, so that while he is investigating the secrets of nature, he should not neglect to acquaint himself also with the secrets of the human heart. If, on the other hand, his line is to be literary, I would keep the light literature somewhat down, lest by its fascination it should draw away the mind from the more serious studies. It is sure to be taken up later, and with all the more pleasure and profit if a good foundation has first been laid by steady literary work. Look some day, if you are not already acquainted with them, at Sir W. Scott's remarks upon desultory reading in the early chapters of 'Waverley,' and take his warning against the dissipation of mind to which, with some natures at all events, it is likely to lead.

I content myself with saying that it is one of the great advantages of such places of learning as our universities, that every student has the means of readily obtaining advice, guidance, and assistance in laying out and in pursuing a course of serious study. He will here be introduced to the great minds of the past—to the historians, the philosophers, the orators, the poets—whose works have charmed and have instructed generation after generation; and he will be shown how best to employ his time in turning his acquaintance with them to profit. The only piece of

advice I would give is one which no doubt he has received from many others: it is, to make a point of mastering at least one subject of study by sheer hard work, without the aid of any of the ingenious inventions for saving time and trouble which are so dangerously tempting. Set your faces alike against the use of cribs and translations, and against the skipping of difficult passages. Do not try to turn the flank of a difficulty, but brace up your mind to overcome it. By doing this with one or more branches of your work, you will strengthen your mental powers and gain a vantage-ground from which you will be able with ease to invade and conquer the fruitful plains of knowledge which you will perceive lying open before you. As a wit once said, "Easy writing is confoundedly hard reading," so we may say of easy study that it means terribly barren knowledge. You may, indeed, apply to true knowledge the noble lines in which Wordsworth addresses the Grecian crowd who shouted when they heard the proclamation of their country's freedom at the hands of their conqueror. Those who desire to gain that glorious boon—

> "Must either win by effort of their own
> The prize, or be content to see it worn
> By more deserving brows."

It is rather tempting at this stage of my observations to open once more the old controversy between the Ancients and the Moderns, and to fight the 'Bat-

tle of the Books' over again. But I am unwilling to do it, because my object is not to set one generation or one country against another, but rather to awaken in you an interest in the literature of all time, and to find the points which authors of different ages and nations have in common, rather than those on which they may be supposed to be at variance.

You may remember that the 'Battle of the Books' began by a demand addressed by the Moderns to the Ancients that the latter, who were the occupants of the higher of the two summits of Mount Parnassus, should either resign their time-honoured occupancy in favour of their younger neighbours, or else should allow the Moderns to come and level the hill with their shovels and mattocks to such a height as they might think convenient. This modest proposal was courteously but summarily rejected by the Ancients, who, as an alternative, proposed that the Moderns should rather occupy themselves with raising their own side of the hill than dream of pulling down the other.

This was excellent advice, applicable perhaps to other cases of rivalry besides that of jealous authors: and, looking upon the course of events since Dean Swift's days, we may, I think, say that it has on the whole been followed. Assuredly the authors who have arisen both in this country and in others within the last century and a half have done much towards raising the modern standard; while, in spite of the

changes which modern education has brought about, in spite of the pressure of scientific competition, in spite of the discouragement of quotations, and the banishment of Horace from the House of Commons, ancient learning is still held in high esteem, and year by year fresh excursions are made into its well-known territories, and fresh discoveries are reported from its well-trodden plains. If modern literature has any competition to dread, it is not that of the old classical writers, but of the daily, weekly, or monthly periodicals, which fall as thick around us as the leaves in Vallombrosa, and go near to suffocate the poor victim who is longing to enjoy his volume in peace, whether that volume be of Sophocles, or of Shakespeare, or of Goethe, or of Burns. Or if by chance our would-be student is one who, for his sins, is engaged in political contests himself, he may recall the position of Walter Scott's Black Knight at the siege of Front de Bœuf's castle, when deafened by the din which his own blows upon the gate contributed to raise. How, under such circumstances, he must wish that he were like Dicæopolis in the 'Acharnians,' and could make a separate peace for himself!

But may my good angel preserve me from entering into anything like a controversy with the great periodical press! It is a mighty engine with a giant's strength, which we can only trust that it may not use like a giant, or at least not like the traditional giant, who is supposed to be given to tyrannous

exercise of his powers. Cowper's lines mark well its excellences and its faults:—

> "How shall I speak thee, or thy power address,
> Thou god of our idolatry, the Press?
> By thee religion, liberty, and laws
> Exert their influence and advance their cause;
> By thee, worse plagues than Pharaoh's land befell
> Diffused, make earth the vestibule of hell.
> Thou fountain at which drink the good and wise,
> Thou ever-bubbling spring of endless lies,
> Like Eden's dread probationary tree,
> Knowledge of good and evil is from thee."

Knowledge of good and evil! Yes; whatever may have been the original position of our first parents, we, their descendants, have this knowledge forced upon us, and we cannot escape from it. Our aim and object must be, not to escape or to close our eyes to it, or to keep it out by the method of the wiseacre who shut his park gates against the crows; but to neutralise the evil by seeking out the good, and to strengthen our minds by sound discipline, and purify our taste by the loving study of literature of the nobler type, so that we may instinctively reject that which is mean and unworthy.

I must leave to yourselves the question of the amount of time you ought to give to the current literature of the day. Much of it is addressed to particular classes of persons, and has an interest for them which it does not possess for others. Much, on the other hand, consists of popular renderings of

abstruser subjects, sometimes admirable and useful to all, sometimes, it is to be feared, of little value or interest for any one. Habit and a little trying experience will soon teach you to discern how much of a periodical is worth the expenditure of much time; and you will not be long before you acquire some skill in the arts of dipping and of skipping.

Of novels I must speak in somewhat the same strain. There is probably no form of idleness so seductive or so enervating to the mind as indiscriminate novel-reading. Yet some of the best and most truly instructive books in the world belong to this class. From 'Don Quixote' to 'Waverley,' from the 'Vicar of Wakefield' to 'The Caxtons,' from Miss Austen or Miss Edgeworth or Miss Ferrier to Charlotte Brontë or George Eliot, you will find what Horace found in those great Homeric poems, humour and wisdom, and a keen insight into the strength and the weakness of the human character. Think what a mine of wealth we possess in the novels of your own great master, what depths he sounds, what humours he makes us acquainted with, from King James in his palace to Jonathan Oldbuck in his study; from Jeanie Deans sacrificing herself to her sisterly love in all but her uncompromising devotion to truth, to the picture of family affection and overmastering grief in the hut of poor Steenie Mucklebackit; or again, from the fidelity of Meg Merrilies to that of Caleb Balderstone! You have in these, and in a hundred other instances,

examples of the great power of discerning genius to seize upon the secrets of the human heart, and to reveal the inner meanings of the events which history records upon its surface, but which we do not feel that we really understand till some finer mind has clothed the dry bones with flesh and blood, and presented them to us in their appropriate raiment.

I will permit myself to make but one more remark on Sir Walter Scott—for I am always a little in danger of running wild about him—and it is this: Our ancestors and ancestresses read for their light literature such books as the 'Grand Cyrus' and Pembroke's 'Arcadia.' I never tried the former. I have made one or two attempts on the latter without much success. But I have sufficient general knowledge of their dimensions and of their character to be sure that no one with a volume of Scott at hand would ever deliberately lay it aside in favour of either of them. May I not hope that the same preference, which you instinctively afford to him over works such as those I have referred to, you will also extend to him in comparison with the great floating mass of unsubstantial and ephemeral literature, which is in truth undeserving of the name, but which is unfortunately attractive enough to tempt you to choke your minds with inferior rubbish?

And now let me say a few words to you upon poetry. We are told on high authority that the poet is born, not made. Perhaps the same might, in a

lesser degree, be said of his readers also. There are some natures which approach more nearly to the poetic than others, and these can best appreciate the thoughts that underlie a poem, and the power of expressing those thoughts in appropriate, perhaps in striking, language. But in almost every one I imagine there are implanted some seeds at least of the faculty of which we speak, and these seeds are capable of cultivation. A man may not be able to make himself a poet—and I am sure we would all join in praying that he may never try—but he may be able to train himself to understand and to love the poetry of others. Indeed we cannot doubt that so it must be when we see how widely spread, and among what varying classes of mankind, is the thirst for poetry of some kind. The ballad is, I suppose, the simplest and earliest form of it. Scotland and England have alike contributed largely to ballad poetry; and whether your 'Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border' or the English 'Reliques' of ancient poetry is to be preferred, I leave you to judge for yourselves, recommending both collections to your favourable notice. Your older poets are, I suppose, now but little read; yet I was struck by finding some time ago, when I happened to ask at the London Library for Barbour's great poem on the Bruce, that, though the library boasted of three copies, they were all three at that moment lent out. I was pleased to think that in these days, when

it is as necessary as it ever was to plead the cause of personal freedom, there should be a run upon a book which contains that spirited apostrophe :—

"Ah! freedom is a noble thing!
Freedom makes man to have liking.
Freedom all solace to man gives;
He lives at ease that freely lives.
A noble heart may have none else,
Nor else nought that may him please,
If freedom fail; for free liking
Is yearned over all other thing."

There has been of late years a striking revival of popularity in the case of Barbour's great contemporary, Chaucer. Let us hope that your countryman may have a similar fortune. But we cannot easily rank any one with Chaucer. For variety, for power of description, for touching and tender appeals to the feelings, for genuine, though sometimes rather coarse, fun, and for delineation of character, he occupies a place in the world of poetry such as few can aspire to.

You have other poets well worthy to be read. Sir David Lindsay, Allan Ramsay, and others, will be names with which you are familiar, though perhaps they may not be widely read. But your greatest poet, excluding or not excluding Scott, is one whom all, I trust, find time to study. I mean, of course, Robert Burns.

I am about to quote a sentence or two on the char-

acter of Burns's poetry from the work of a friend whom we have lately lost, well known not only as Principal of one of your famous universities, but also as Professor of Poetry in the University of Oxford, one much valued by all to whom he was known,—the late Principal Shairp. This is his judgment:—

"At the basis of all his power lay absolute truthfulness, intense reality, truthfulness to the objects which he saw, truthfulness to himself as the seer of them. . . .

"Here was a man, a son of toil, looking out on the world from his cottage, on society low and high, and on nature homely or beautiful, with the clearest eye, the most piercing insight, and the warmest heart, touching life at a hundred points, seeing to the core all the sterling worth, not less the pretence and hollowness of the men he met, the humour, the drollery, the pathos, and the sorrow of human existence; and expressing what he saw, not in the stock phrases of books, but in his own vernacular, the language of his fireside, with a directness, a force, a vitality that tingled to the finger-tips, and forced the phrases of his peasant dialect into literature, and made them for ever classical. Large sympathy, generous enthusiasm, reckless abandonment, fierce indignation, melting compassion, rare flashes of moral insight, all are there. Everywhere you see the strong intellect made alive, and driven home to the mark, by the fervid heart behind it."

I will not weaken these vigorous words by any addition of my own. I remember the warning given by Charles Lamb that it is almost more dangerous for a Southerner to praise Burns to a Scotchman than to dispraise him. But you may well believe that we

Englishmen have a true and a warm appreciation of the great poet.

"Non obtusa adeo gestamus pectora."

I am sure that it must be unnecessary for me to say anything of the great stream of leading English poets from Shakespeare to Milton, to Dryden, to Pope, to Wordsworth, Scott, and Byron. But there are others less universally read whom I wish to call your attention to—especially the great dramatists of or about the Shakespeare age. Ben Jonson probably deserves the first place among them. His racy representations of the follies and oddities, and, as he would call them, the humours of the day, are balanced by the classical reproductions which led Milton to speak of Jonson's learned sock, though there are indeed some which almost rise to the dignity of the buskin. The "Alchemist," the "Fox," and the "Every Man in his Humour," have made themselves well known. Let me commend to you a less read drama, "Catiline," in which the story of the great conspiracy is finely told, partly through noble paraphrases of Cicero and Sallust, and partly through the play of the dialogue between the conspirators. If any of you should be tempted to read it, let him take note of the delicious piece of partly personal, partly political gossip among the Roman ladies, which leads to the betrayal of the plot. There is another clever Roman play, the "Poetaster,"

which would have been a rather appropriate subject for discussion to-night, for it tells the old, old tale of the struggle between father and son—when the one enjoins the study of the law, the other flies resolutely to his studies in poetry.

There are two beautiful plays of Ford's, the "Broken Heart" and the "Lover's Melancholy," which bear reading over and over again:—

> "As for some dear familiar strain
> Untired we ask, and ask again;
> Ever, in its melodious store,
> Finding a spell unheard before."

Massinger is interesting, and you doubtless know several of his plays by name, if not more intimately.

But I must not linger over these, nor try to find a fit place for Spenser, whom I honour much and read a little, especially his first book; or for Marlowe, the pioneer of the English drama, whose delicious little song, "Come live with me and be my love," carries one from the crowd and the struggle of life to country scenes worthy of Izaak Walton himself; or for that very little read Drayton, whose great 'Polyolbion' seems as if it might have filled the place of a Bradshaw's 'Guide' to tourists of the "Arcadia" stamp. Let me tell you that you will find a good deal of very good poetry in that same 'Polyolbion,' if you venture to face it. And I am leaving out Cowley, and Waller, and a hundred more; and I am not even attempting to enter upon the poetry of the eighteenth or of this

present nineteenth century; nor upon our prose-writers, nor upon the great field of foreign literature; though it is with difficulty that I turn away from those giants of France, Pascal and Molière, from whom there is more to be learned than from any two writers of their day, and who well repay the closest study. Nor have I said a word of the classics, whom I fear I must group all together, and bid you "Nocturnâ versate manu, versate diurnâ."

It might seem, when we are running through a catalogue such as I have been suggesting to you, that we are awakening the dead to bear us company. May I quote to you some beautiful lines of Southey's—to which he gives the title of The Scholar?

"My days among the dead are past;
Around me I behold,
Where'er these casual eyes are cast,
The mighty minds of old.
My never-failing friends are they,
With whom I converse day by day.

With them I take delight in weal,
And seek relief in woe;
And while I understand and feel
How much to them I owe,
My cheeks have often been bedewed
With tears of thoughtful gratitude.

My thoughts are with the dead; with them
I live in long-past years,
Their virtues love, their faults condemn,
Partake their hopes and fears;
And from their lessons seek and find
Instruction with a humble mind.

My hopes are with the dead; anon
My place with them will be,
And I with them shall travel on
Through all futurity;
Yet leaving here a name, I trust,
That will not perish in the dust."

And now, gentlemen, my time is drawing to a close, and I must not adventure myself further in seductive flowery fields of desultory charm. I believe it is good for us all occasionally to indulge in such recreation under the shade, even in the midst of a hot day's work. The work will not be the worse done for such a respite. But we must not allow it to be forgotten. Those dead of whom the poet speaks are not only our companions, they stand round us like a great cloud of witnesses to mark how we perform the task which has been given us to do, and fight the battle which has been committed to our hands. If there be any slackness or any cowardice on our part, their voices will "sound like a distant torrent's fall," and will reproach our shortcoming. But if we be honest and valiant, we shall not turn to them in vain for sympathy and for encouragement. Among them we shall find the records of those who have passed through harder trials and accomplished greater deeds than those which are demanded of us. They have, many of them, won eternal fame; be sure that it did not settle quietly upon their brows: it was won in the only way in which fame can be worth the winning—it was won by labour. That is the path which they trod: it is the path which you

must tread also. I will take my last quotation from one who is well known to you all, whom I need not name, for you will recognise his words at once.

"Rocking on a lazy billow
With roaming eyes,
Cushioned on a dreamy pillow,
Thou art not wise;
Wake the power within thee sleeping,
Trim the plot that's in thy keeping,
Thou wilt bless the task when reaping
Sweet labour's prize."

V.

ON THE STUDY OF POLITICAL ECONOMY.

A LECTURE DELIVERED AT EXETER,

OCTOBER 7, 1845.

MR NORTHCOTE had been during the past three years secretary to Mr Gladstone, Mr Gladstone being first Vice-President, then President, of the Board of Trade. From the beginning, political life had many attractions to Mr Northcote, as we often in old letters find him speaking of the interest of such a career, and rather as the goal to which his hopes were tending. As Mr Gladstone's secretary, these hopes became more definite, and it is probable that it was from the interest he always took in public life, that he studied the question of Political Economy, and wrote the following lecture, which was delivered at Exeter, October 7, 1845. The newspaper of the day, in noticing this address, after praising its ability, points out the added interest it has in showing that "the higher and lower classes are amalgamating by the best possible ties —viz., by young men of talent and station in society devoting their time and thoughts to the good of others less able to obtain knowledge for themselves." This comment points strikingly the change in our social habits, as meetings of all classes to hear speeches are now of everyday occurrence.

BEFORE commencing the remarks which I am about to make, I wish it clearly to be understood that I do not intend this evening to propose

to you any particular system of political economy as superior to other systems, nor in any manner to enter upon the discussion of those points which are, or which have been, disputed among political economists. My objects on the present occasion will be simply these: first, to endeavour to remove certain misconceptions and prejudices which I believe to be commonly prevalent with respect to this science, and to point out its real dignity and importance, in order to do which I shall have to explain to you what the science of political economy is; and, secondly, to suggest certain cautions with respect to the manner in which the study should be carried on, and the limits within which the doctrines which we may arrive at ought to be applied. The first part of my remarks, therefore, will be addressed principally to those persons (and I believe them to be a very numerous class) who have conceived a dislike for the study of this science, either from a belief that it is dry and uninteresting, or from feeling objections of a graver nature, which I shall presently touch upon. The second part will have reference to those who have, on the other hand, conceived an undue opinion of the value of the science, or of the extent to which it may be used, and who frequently give occasion, by their exaggerated notions, for the feeling of dislike which is entertained against it by others.

To begin, then, with those who object to the study of political economy, that it is a dry and uninteresting

science. Of course, it would be absurd in any one to attempt seriously to persuade a man by argument that what he thinks uninteresting is interesting. I certainly do not intend to undertake any such task. There are many people, for instance, who think the study of mathematics exceedingly stupid; others there are who delight in nothing more. Now you may convince one of those who dislike it that it is necessary he should undertake it, because perhaps he is to be a builder, and must know something of trigonometry; or a sailor, and ought to study astronomy; and it is possible that while studying it on account of its importance he may learn to take an interest in it, and may continue it for its own sake. Again, there are people who, having only looked at the elementary parts of the science, are ignorant of its many beautiful applications to common life, and who, if these are pointed out to them, will change their opinion respecting the dulness of the study. But if a man, knowing what the science of mathematics is, and being engaged in a line of life where it is not likely to be of any particular use to him, feels no interest in investigating abstract questions about curves and triangles, I do not believe it is possible for any one, however interested in such questions himself, to induce that man to feel an interest in them. Now, with respect to the science of political economy, I feel confident that when it is fairly stated what that science is, many of those who now reject it as useless will perceive that it is

highly important to them—nay, that they cannot fulfil their duties to society without engaging in the study of it; while others, to whom it may not be necessary (if, indeed, there be any such), will, when they find what a wide range of objects it embraces, be induced to feel a very great interest in it. But I cannot pretend to do more than to explain what the relations of political economy to the business of life are, and I must disclaim any intention to prove by argument what I know well can only ultimately be a matter of feeling.

It may seem superfluous to remind you that every science is connected with some one or more arts, and that every art is based upon some one or more sciences. Thus the science of chemistry is connected with the arts of medicine, agriculture, and others; while on the other hand the art of medicine is based on the sciences of chemistry, botany, and so forth. When, therefore, we are about to consider the value of any particular science, we inquire what are the arts for the practice of which it is required; and when we desire to know whether the professor of any particular art is qualified for the exercise of it, we ask what are the sciences on which that art is based, and whether he is versed in all of them. The former consideration will determine those who have leisure time and are inclined to scientific pursuits, in the choice of a study which is to be engaged in for its own sake; the latter consideration will induce those who are engaged in

the practice of particular arts to look well whether they are masters of the corresponding sciences. Those who think highly of the dignity of the art of medicine, and are strongly impressed with a sense of the importance of the science of chemistry as connected with it, will, if they have leisure, devote themselves to the study of that science, in the hope of making new discoveries or elucidating difficult questions in matters which bear so closely upon some of the dearest interests of mankind. But those who are themselves engaged in the practice of this art, cannot for very shame do otherwise than attentively study and diligently prosecute the science of chemistry, however it may in itself be repugnant to their natural tastes.

Now the art with which the science of political economy is connected is the art of legislation. No doubt legislators have many other matters to attend to besides those which are the immediate subjects of this science; but this one thing is beyond question, that the objects which political economy has in view—namely, the accumulation and the distribution in the best manner possible of the necessaries, the comforts, and the conveniences of life among the members of the body of the State—must of necessity be objects on which the legislator is bound to bestow careful consideration. A definition is said to have been given to a lady who asked the meaning of the phrase "political economy," which may throw some light on what I am anxious to say. It was replied to her: "You

understand perfectly what is meant by household economy; you need only extend your idea of the economy of a family to that of a whole people—of a nation—and you will have some comprehension of the nature of political economy." Now, I am far from saying that a family has not many other, and some more important matters to attend to, besides this of household economy; but I need scarcely point out to you that without household economy of some sort a family could not exist. You are doubtless well aware that economy does not mean frugality or anything of that kind—it means simply regulation of the house; and without some such regulation, there would be no servants, no system of expenditure, either moderate or profuse, no division of employments, no stated hours of meals, of recreation, or of sleep. So that it is evident that every master or mistress of a family, if they lay down rules on any of these points, must be so far practising household economy; and if they are to lay down good rules, they must for that purpose be to some extent acquainted with what we may call the science of family or household economy.

In the same manner it is the duty of the legislator to make regulations (or at least to see whether regulations are needed) for the distribution of employment among the members of the State, for the encouragement of necessary branches of industry, for the raising of the funds required for public purposes with the least possible inconvenience, for the maintenance of

the poor, and many similar matters; and if he does this at all, he is practising political economy, and if he is to do it well, he must study political economy.

Now this science, which is the science of the legislator, is important for you to know, inasmuch as most of you, perhaps in respect of matters of economy I may say all of you, are yourselves legislators. So many of you as have votes for the election of members of Parliament are clearly responsible to a certain extent for the opinions of those whom you choose to make laws for you, and it would therefore be well if you more generally studied the principles involved in those questions of economy which are frequently made the turning-point of an election. It is of course possible that you may vote for a particular candidate, because you feel confidence in his general moral character, in his abilities and his industry, and you may be content (and wisely so) to trust to him for the adoption of sound principles of economy without understanding them yourselves; but when you express opinions with respect to such questions as Corn Laws or Poor Laws, or Free Trade, you are in fact undertaking to teach and to put in practice so far as you can a system of political economy, without having even studied the principles of the science.

These, however, are questions so obviously demanding study from those who undertake to pronounce on them, that I shall not offer any remarks on its necessity. What I wish rather to point out is, that there

are many other questions on which people think themselves qualified to form a judgment without having the least notion of the principles of political economy, because they do not perceive the connection which subsists between them and that science. For instance, take such a question as the limitation of the hours of factory labour. Many people imagine they can decide such a question as this upon principles of humanity without reference to principles of economy. They say (which, I will suppose, is perfectly true)—Humanity is sufficient to teach us that the workmen in such and such a factory are in a very wretched condition. They say (which is also perfectly true)—Humanity is sufficient to teach us that we ought to endeavour to ameliorate their condition. So far, well. But then they say—In order to do this, we will compulsorily shorten their hours of labour. Now I do not for a moment say that this may not be a very proper remedy to apply; perhaps it is. But I say to the man who proposes it—Are you sure that this remedy *will* really do what you want? Have you studied it as a question of political economy? No; he will reply. This is not a question which ought to be decided on principles of political economy. Political economy treats men merely as machines, but I am bound to look at them as fellow-creatures. I stand now on the broad ground of humanity, and I do not trouble myself about the doctrines which the political economists may hold on the subject. Of such a man

as this (and I believe there are many who argue in a similar manner) I should say that he might be a man of excellent heart and sound moral principles, but that he was ignorant of a science which is essential to legislation, and that he was therefore most unfit to be a legislator. For take a parallel case in another art. Suppose a man falls down in the street; a person comes up and undertakes to prescribe for him. He says—Humanity is sufficient to teach me that this man is in a wretched condition, and that it is my duty to endeavour to ameliorate that condition; and in order to do so, I will cause him to be bled. But, we ask, are you sure that bleeding will relieve him? Do you know anything of the science of medicine? Is it the proper remedy? What should we say if he replied, No; I know nothing of medicine. This is not a case where we are to stand upon the rules of science: it is a case where humanity calls upon us to interfere, and I will look for no other dictates than those of my own heart? Should we think this man fit to act as a doctor? It might happen that his remedy was the proper one; it would be at least equally probable that the man would die under it. Yet we do not think it absurd that a man should undertake to legislate for a case of very complicated difficulty without the smallest acquaintance with the only science which could either point out to him the cause of the disorder or the probable effects of his treatment of it.

So far as to those who, either by voting at elections, by speaking at meetings, by signing petitions or otherwise, directly interfere in the course of legislation on matters which are the subjects of political economy. But I must notice others who, though probably imagining that they at least have no concern with this science, are nevertheless daily applying or neglecting to apply its principles in their ordinary transactions, and who prosper or fail according as they apply them rightly or wrongly. Thus the farmer who deliberates whether he shall make most by cultivating large crops of less valuable produce, or small crops of the more valuable; the tailor who calculates that it is better worth his while to buy hats and shoes than to attempt to make them for himself; the labourer who considers whether he is able to support a family, or who marries without considering; the manufacturer who proposes to introduce a machine into his factory; the workman who destroys a machine, because he thinks it throws him out of employment; the doctor who resolves to commence business in a town where he thinks there is an opening for him; the artisan who emigrates because he cannot get work,—all these and many others in every action of such a nature are, whether consciously or unconsciously, applying principles of political economy. And, as I said before, in matters of this sort almost every individual is to a certain extent a legislator. For we noticed that the duty of the Legislature is to make regulations with

respect to the accumulation and distribution of wealth, or to see whether regulations are needed. Now, if every individual would in his own sphere act upon sound principles of political economy, general legislation, which is always difficult, would become unnecessary. Thus no one would think of passing a law to compel the division of labour, because the principles of political economy on this point are so well understood that every one puts them in practice by himself. But, on the other hand, the principles of population are so ill understood, that Poor Laws, which are an imperfect attempt to supply those principles, are obliged to be enacted, in order to mitigate the evil which arises from this want of acquaintance with them. If the principles of the doctrine of division of labour were as little known as those of population, it would be necessary for the legislator to make some regulations in order to remedy the inconvenience which would be felt; but those regulations could not fail of producing hardship, just as no poor law which could possibly be devised, could fail of producing hardship; and they never could bring about so flourishing a state of things as results naturally and without any hardship from the general diffusion of knowledge with respect to this particular doctrine. Every man, then, who applies right principles of political economy to his daily transactions is so far a legislator, inasmuch as he does his part towards rendering legislation on those points unnecessary; and every one who ap-

plies false principles is also so far a legislator, but an evil one, inasmuch as he helps to make legislation, with all its attendant hardships, necessary.

Thus far, then, I have striven to show, in answer to those who object to political economy as uninteresting, that it is at least important, and that, as almost every man practises, either directly or indirectly, an art which is based upon it, it is the duty of almost every man to make himself acquainted with some of its principles. I have now to deal with another class of objections, which I have indeed already incidentally noticed, but which deserve a very full and careful consideration.

There are many excellent people who object to political economy, not because it is uninteresting, but because they think it has a bad end in view,—that it tends to exalt material above moral interests, to make wealth seem the great object of human desire, and to destroy our sympathies with our fellow-creatures by reducing them to the level of mere machines. So far are they from regarding the student of political economy as the fittest person to form an opinion on the subjects which fall within his peculiar province, that they expressly disable his judgment and challenge him, as the parties in a lawsuit challenge a prejudiced or interested juryman. All this is wrong and highly injurious, though I do not think it is difficult to account for. It is produced partly, by an unreasoning alarm at the use of a particular word in the definition

of political economy; partly, by a keen perception of the evil results of an abuse of the science itself, which, as I shall presently take occasion to observe, are very common, but are by no means peculiar to this more than to other sciences.

In order to examine the justice of some of these objections, we must recur to the definition of political economy. This has been given in various words, according as those who have treated of it have assigned wider or narrower limits to the science. Perhaps I shall not be wrong in calling it (by a slight alteration of one of these definitions), The science which teaches us to investigate the causes of the wealth and material prosperity of nations. A science must, as you know, be confined to investigation. The *art* of the political economist, strictly so called, is the art of accumulating and distributing wealth, so as to cause the greatest material prosperity in a nation.

Now, in these definitions, I have made use of a word which, I believe, has been introduced into every definition which has been given of this science, but at which many people are much offended—I mean the word "wealth." A clamour is raised against a science which aims at so unworthy, and, as it is even said, so prejudicial an end. The political economist is assailed by the arguments which are commonly used against individuals who devote themselves to money-getting. The interests of humanity, the practice of the moral virtues, the pursuit of religious truth, are all repre-

sented as sacrificed to this unhallowed object; and the examples of many of the nations of antiquity are quoted, in order to show that their vigorous and flourishing periods were marked by the absence of wealth, and that riches and luxury went hand in hand with their downfall.

It is perhaps unfortunate that the word in question should be used in the definition of political economy before it has been itself defined; for the greater part of these objections are founded on the idea that wealth means money, and it so happens that from the time the science was first brought into a regular form, the first point which it has set about proving has been that wealth does not mean money. Wealth consists, not in gold and silver, but in the necessaries, the comforts, and the conveniences of life. I believe that, had these words been used at full, instead of the one which is employed to represent them, we should have heard much less of the objections I have noticed. Still, if the great principle be admitted, that we are to look upon the pursuit of wealth by a nation in the same light as the pursuit of wealth by an individual, there would really be as much to be said against the accumulation of these necessaries, comforts, and conveniences, as against the accumulation of gold and silver. A man who devotes his energies to laying up much goods for many years in his barns and storehouses, is in as pitiable a case in the sight of God as a man who devotes himself to hoarding money: he is

equally in danger of forgetting the more important matters which he ought to attend to; equally likely to be selfish and grasping, and anxious and hard-hearted. The real answer, therefore, that we have to make upon this point is, that the legislator who considers the means of producing wealth for the nation is in a very different position from the man who considers the means of producing it for himself. You will not forget that it is one of the first of Christian graces to provide for the wants of the poor; but though this duty is imposed upon us with respect to all mankind, it is more especially incumbent upon us to fulfil it with regard to those who are immediately dependent upon our care. "If any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." The legislator, then, upon whom the care of the people devolves—the Shepherd of the people, as the ancients called him—is bound to exercise forethought and consideration for the promotion of their interests; and it will surely be found that if he undertakes it in a right spirit, the careful watchfulness for others, the self-denial and renunciation of his own personal interests which he will have to practise, will form in him very different habits of mind from those of the covetous man and the miser. But, say the objectors, however this may be with the legislator himself, he is not really consulting the true interests of his people in striving to render them more wealthy. Were not

Sparta and Rome, and many other countries, flourishing while they were poor? and did not they degenerate when they became rich? Whether wealth consist in gold and silver, or in those things which gold and silver represent and will purchase, must not its increase produce national luxury, and must not luxury produce national ruin?

To this I reply, let us begin a little further back. Take a nation without any notion of political economy at all, that will be a nation of savages. These people have no ideas of property; they have almost no laws—only such as are necessary for carrying on the petty wars which they will from time to time be engaged in; they live by hunting and fishing; each man supports himself by his own labour, and makes for himself every article that he needs. I suppose I may be excused from wasting words in proving that these people are not in the highest state of happiness which man is destined for; that they are excluded from cultivating moral excellence by want of time and opportunity for instruction; that they are exposed to peculiar temptations to violence, rapine, and cruelty; and that he who could bring them out of this state into one of civilisation, as it is called, would be really and truly a benefactor to them. Let us trace their progress, then, in improvement, supposing them to be assisted by the advice of such a person. The first thing he will teach them is to respect private property: without this nothing can be done. The hunter,

who has found that his game is scarce in the winter, and who has learned the way of preserving that which he kills in the summer, will nevertheless make no use of his discovery unless he is secure that his stock will not be taken from him by his less industrious but stronger neighbours. But, when once laws have been made for protecting him in the enjoyment of the fruits of his industry, he will labour zealously to make a provision for himself and his family against a time of scarcity. The introduction of the right of property will by degrees encourage further enterprise — will teach men to keep tame cattle, secure that they will have the sole right to their milk, and to sow corn, in the confidence that they will reap it the next year. These improvements will of necessity lead to the division and appropriation of land, which will originally have been common to all the dwellers upon it, but of which portions will now be assigned to the cultivators of corn or the keepers of cattle.

Immediately consequent upon the establishment of the right of property will be the introduction of a system of barter. One man, as we have seen, has learned the art of preserving provisions, another has found out the advantage of keeping cattle. These two, seeing that each has something which the other would like to have, but which he has not a right to take, will soon find out the way of exchanging cured meat for milk, though this will at first take place only on a small scale, since the one has only just enough meat, and

the other only just enough milk, to last him through the winter. Next winter, however, the man who cures meat will find that if he cures a little more than he wants he can make use of it to get himself some milk. He might, to be sure, make the same quantity as before, and also set about keeping cattle for himself; but he soon finds that, though he can cure meat better than his neighbour, he cannot manage cattle so well. His neighbour makes the same discovery, and therefore increases his stock of cattle, thus securing to himself a supply of milk, and the means of getting a supply of meat too. Other people will also have been making discoveries of their own—one will have learnt to make dresses out of hides, another to grow corn, another to build huts; each will find it more profitable to confine himself to one occupation than to undertake several; and as new arts are discovered, and the division of labour is carried further and further, each individual will be able to get a greater quantity of comforts together, and will thus be able to find time for applying to the cultivation of his mind, which the savage never could do, because his labour, being ill directed, was of necessity very severe and protracted, in order to enable him to support himself; while the labour of the civilised man, being much more productive in proportion, affords him the means of subsistence at a less expense of time and energy.

So far, then, I presume I carry you with me in asserting that the art by which all this improvement

would have been effected—namely, the art of political economy—has been beneficial to the savage nation. But having brought matters thus far, we find they cannot stop there. The increase of comfort will necessarily lead to an increase of population, the increase of population to a demand for land, so that after a time the whole face of the country will be divided into parcels of private property. Then will come seasons of drought or of tempests, and some who depend on the cultivation of their lands will be ruined, and having no produce to sell for their support, will be forced to sell their lands themselves to those who have been more fortunate or more skilful, or who have laid by some of their surplus produce in former years. Thus society will begin to be divided into rich and poor, and the latter, having no longer any property of their own, will be obliged to sell their labour to the rich in order to obtain the means of subsistence; and as this will be profitable to the rich, they will become more rich, and so the inequality will go on increasing, and the rich will gradually get all the power into their own hands, and the poor will be to a greater and greater extent at their mercy. Now, in such a state of things, you will agree that it is desirable that there should be some check to prevent the rich abusing this power, which it is in the nature of events absolutely impossible to prevent their acquiring. You will observe that there may be two controlling forces brought to bear upon them: first, the force of humanity, of religious principle, or

of other motives acting upon the moral sense of the rich themselves; and secondly, the force of legislation. But in the application of either of these forces the science of political economy is needed, in order to produce the desired effect. The rich may indeed ameliorate the condition of the poor in individual cases by friendliness and private liberality; but to do it upon a large scale, according to a systematic plan, requires careful study, and is a work of both difficulty and risk. Still greater is the difficulty and risk of legislating for the purpose, and a greater amount of knowledge is required in order to enable any one to do so. It might seem a simple matter to provide that every man who had saved a thousand pounds should divide it among ten of his poorer neighbours, or to require that every owner of a manufactory should keep a certain number of men in work at certain wages; but if the effect of these measures were to be that the rich man was ruined, it would ultimately be sure to be ruinous to the poor, among whom he might otherwise have dispensed moderate comforts. Political economy will teach us to regard the interests neither of the rich nor of the poor, but of the community, which is composed of both; it will teach us that to improve the condition of the one it is not necessary to destroy the existence of the other; it will point out to us how national, as distinguished from individual, wealth may be produced, and will show us in what way and by what measures it may be most equitably divided

among all classes. Other evils there will be in an advanced state of society, which will require the aid of science to cure or mitigate them. The increase of population will outstrip the supply of food, unless measures are taken to check the one or to increase the other. True, the ordinary course of things will bring the remedy at last, for the surplus of population must eventually be carried off by disease or famine; but how much misery will be spared if the warnings of the economist are attended to in time, and measures of prevention taken before the evil day has come! I sum up, then, what I have said on this part of the argument, by reminding you that political economy is necessary, in the first instance, in order to bring a savage nation to such a degree of civilisation that they may have time to devote to moral and intellectual pursuits; that when they have attained this point, it continues to be necessary for the guidance of those who are desirous of guarding against the evils which must in the natural course arise from the accumulation of wealth so far: I now turn briefly to notice the objection, to which I have already alluded, that it may be used to aggravate those evils which it is designed to prevent. On this point I need only say that the same may be said of any science in the world. The science of medicine is of use to teach us how to cure diseases. If we undertake to cure diseases, we must of necessity study the science of medicine; yet this science teaches us also the nature of poisons, and it is

perfectly possible that we may make use of it to destroy instead of to preserve life. The science of logic teaches us to reason correctly—it points out fallacies, in order that we may learn to detect and avoid them; but it is impossible to prevent a clever logician, if he is a bad man, from making use of this knowledge in order to employ more specious, and therefore more dangerous, fallacies in his arguments. So, too, the science of political economy teaches us how to produce national wealth and prosperity—it teaches us to avoid measures which will benefit one class or a few individuals at the expense of the rest of the community; but the economist, if he be a bad man, may apply his knowledge to the promotion of private, and not of general interests. The remedy for these evils is to be found, not in the discouragement but in the extension of the study of the science. The poisoner could not practise upon those who knew medicine as well as himself, nor could the sophist persuade those who were trained to detect fallacies. So, too, the false economist can delude those only by his theories who are not acquainted with the principles of the science. But no one will seriously consider that a wilful abuse of this kind is sufficient to discredit the right use of this or any other science. What is more important to remark upon is the danger to which its professors are exposed of abusing it involuntarily and without any corrupt intention; and this tendency will lead me to offer to you, in the last place, a few remarks on the

caution to be observed in the application of this science to the business of legislation.

The objects of political economy are twofold. In part it teaches us what ends are to be sought; in part it shows us how those ends are to be attained. In each of these aspects it has its peculiar dangers, which its professors must carefully guard against.

In so far as the legislator applies to political economy to learn what he must do for the advantage of the country, he must remember that though the objects of the science are laudable and beneficial in themselves, they are not the only objects, and will frequently not be the principal objects to which he is bound to attend. The general of an army in time of war is bound to take care that his men are supplied with provisions; but it may often be his duty to forego a plan which would furnish them with more abundant supplies, because it would interfere with a more important object, such as the plan of the campaign, or the discipline of his forces: he does not blame his commissary-general for telling him that he ought to do so-and-so; on the contrary, he acknowledges that he is quite right so far as his own branch of the service is concerned; but he says, nevertheless, I cannot do it, because I shall weaken my dispositions, or lose an important moment for action. So the legislator must be careful not to pursue the objects of the economist, if they are inconsistent with the more important objects of the statesman; he must

give the science of political economy its just place, but no more than its just place, as a component part of the complicated and superior science of legislation. He must not quarrel with the economist when he tells him he ought to do so and so, for he speaks as an economist, and as an economist he speaks the truth; but he must not yield to his representations unless he is satisfied as to the effect which their adoption will have upon the general scheme of his legislative policy. Archbishop Whately illustrates this very well when he points out that a physician will often tell a man that he ought, for instance, to go to the sea. He does not mean, says he, that it is the man's moral duty to go there, to the neglect of his occupations and of his family, perhaps to the ruin of his business; all he means is, that if health be his main object, and there are no conflicting duties to prevent his going, he ought to go for the sake of his health. The patient understands him to speak as a physician, and if he is wise he neither thinks himself bound to follow his advice under all conceivable circumstances, nor yet does he blame him for giving it in a case where it cannot be followed. It would be well if both the admirers and the depreciators of political economy would bear this in mind; for the former, puffed up with a little learning, will be continually thrusting forward the maxims of their favourite science to the detriment of the interests of policy, justice, and humanity; while the latter, taking ad-

vantage of this abuse, will be equally forward to decry the science itself, as if it were necessarily in opposition to those interests. But the man who is to legislate for the general interests of his country must be armed at all points, and must know the use and the relative value of every weapon; he must be neither mere philanthropist, nor mere diplomatist, nor mere economist; he must unite in himself all these qualities, duly tempered and proportioned; and if he cannot be perfect in all studies (as who indeed can be?), he must at least have a certain amount of knowledge in each branch, and he must be peculiarly careful how he trusts himself in the application to legislation of those sciences to which he is most devoted.

But further, the legislator stands in need of caution, not only to prevent his preferring the ends of political economy to the nobler ends of justice or humanity, but in order to enable him to judge rightly of the means by which the ends he resolves upon are to be attained. First, we have warned him to be careful *when* he applies the doctrines of the economical science; now, we warn him to be careful also *how* he applies them. We must remember that political economy is not one of those which are called the exact sciences. There are, and always have been, disputes respecting many of its doctrines, though there are some which may be regarded as fixed and ascertained; but even with these, though they enable us to calculate generally as to the effects of particular measures, we are far

from being able to arrive at the kind of certainty which is to be attained in such a science as that of mathematics. In a mathematical calculation we are perfectly acquainted with the elements with which we are to work, and we have ascertained the laws, or some of the laws, which govern their combinations. In an economical calculation we may perhaps have ascertained the laws, but we never can be sure that we are acquainted with all the elements we are to work with. Even in the application of mathematical truths to practice, we may be baffled by the presence of some unknown element. We know with certainty that a projectile will describe a parabola; yet when we come to shoot an arrow on a windy day, we find that the wind practically destroys the accuracy of our calculation.

But in problems of political economy these disturbing forces are always present, and it is never possible to calculate what their precise strength is; so that, however certain we may be of the truth of our general doctrine, we must be content to look upon every case in which we apply it to practice as in the nature of an experiment. We may be quite sure, for instance, that people who have to bring their goods to market will, as a general rule, bring them by the cheapest way. We act upon this, perhaps, and construct a new and shorter road, but we do not find everybody immediately come by it, because one has become accustomed to the old road and does not like to leave it,

another thinks a part of the new road dangerous, a third doubts whether it really is shorter, and a fourth has a prejudice against the people who made it. All these things, if we could have known them beforehand, ought to have been taken in as elements in our calculation how the road would answer; but they could not, at least some of them could not, have been foreseen, for we cannot reckon with certainty on the wayward fancies of men. Yet from some of them we may deduce useful lessons for another calculation: we may learn, for instance, that though a cheap road will be preferred to a dear one, a safe road will also be preferred to a dangerous one, and we may by repeated experiments find how to estimate the amount of increased cheapness, which is in general sufficient to induce men to incur increased danger; but such an estimate can never, in the nature of things, be more than a tolerable approximation, so that the great lesson we shall learn from this, as well as from the prejudices we have encountered, will be, that in applying the doctrines of political economy to practice we must, in every individual case, exercise both care and what is called common-sense in judging of the effect they are likely to produce; that we must check our theory by our experience: and that we must not expect that our true perceptions will be sufficient to overcome the prejudices of the multitude. On the other hand, those, to whom it appears that the economist has failed, must not therefore condemn his doc-

trine as false. They may prove it false by demonstration if they can; but they have no more right to call it false because it has failed in a case which admits of explanation, than we have to deny Sir Isaac Newton's theory of gravitation because we see a feather rising instead of falling on a windy day.

It would be impossible for me on this occasion to add to the remarks I have been making, any notice of the history and the outlines of the science which we have been considering. All I have now attempted to do has been to remove some of the prejudices commonly entertained against undertaking the study of it, and to show you its real dignity and importance. I have added a few words of caution to those who err on the opposite side, in order to remind them of the limits assigned to its province, and also of the care which is needed in the application of its doctrines. In connection with this last topic I have one remark to make, with which I shall conclude: it is that political economy, in order to be profitable, ought always to be studied in connection with history. It is a science in which so much depends upon the knowledge of every element, and in which the knowledge of each element depends so peculiarly upon experience, that we ought to neglect no opportunity of adding to our stock of information. History has been too little written with a view to affording such information, and much that might have been of incalculable value to us has been irrecoverably lost because it appeared

too minute to be worth preserving; but we must make the most of the records we have, and we shall most assuredly find that the two studies, taken in connection, will be far more interesting, as well as far more valuable to us, than we can hope to find them if we engage in them separately. Great care will, however, be required in applying the lessons of history, lest we mistake their bearing. The want of particular information will often mislead us, the want of careful and discriminating attention will often make us assign wrong causes to the effects which we observe. Our study must not be directed to any single portion of history; as it is to be a process of induction, it must embrace as wide a field as possible. He who studies only the periods when kings made it their first object to accumulate gold and silver, and when he was the most powerful prince who had collected the largest treasures, will be apt to imagine that the wealth of a country consists in its money; but he who reads a little further and perceives how the King of Spain, the master of the mines of Mexico and Peru, was reduced almost literally to bankruptcy, while the little knot of provinces which had revolted from him in the Netherlands were advancing to a high pitch of wealth and greatness, under difficulties of the most formidable nature, will see cause to modify his hasty judgment.

One set of facts corrects the deductions which have been drawn from another. The result, no doubt, will be at first that we shall be only the more confused

and unable to arrive at any conclusions: we shall be tempted to wish that we could have been left undisturbed in the theories we were first led to form; but, by degrees, if we are only earnest in our pursuit of truth, fallacies will begin to clear away, and laws will begin to be discovered in the seeming mass of contradictions. Patience and observation will do much for us; they will enable us to test some at least of our theories, and to establish the truth of a few propositions. In the present state of the science, this will be much; to posterity, it will be invaluable. The errors, the improvements, the experiments of our ancestors have brought us thus far; some truths they have given to us as undoubted, which, in their days, were matters of doubt and even of ridicule. They have traced out for us many other principles which we cannot so unhesitatingly accept, which must be sifted and examined with care and suspicion before they can be admitted as standard truths; but we ought to be able to add to the stock which they have given us to begin with, for each acquisition of a truth makes the discovery of further truths more easy—in a complicated investigation we may set aside more and more points as indubitable, may pronounce more positively what the law we seek for is not, and so may ascertain with greater accuracy what it is. We shall hand on the light to our successors with its additional lustre and certainty: they will not have to toil again over the points which we have established, to examine

anxiously into the policy of prohibiting the exportation of the precious metals, into the mysteries of the balance of trade, or into the productiveness or non-productiveness of manufacturing labour. On such ground as this they will tread confidently; they will trust to established principles; and it may be hoped, that they will carry the science of political economy forward till it becomes more nearly what every science tends more or less rapidly to become, a science of exact demonstration.

VI.

SCHOOLS AND SCHOOL LIFE.

A LECTURE

DELIVERED TO

THE LITERARY SOCIETY, EXETER,

OCTOBER 12, 1864.

SOME time previously, Sir Stafford Northcote had been associated with Lord Clarendon in a Commission of Inquiry on Public Schools. This Commission had been appointed to draft reports for Parliament, as measures were then in contemplation for the improvement of education. At the end of this lecture a few extracts are appended from letters received by Sir Stafford Northcote with regard to the subject.

I CONFESS that the attendance to-night, large and respectable as it is, and containing amongst it so many of my old friends here, makes me a little nervous, because I cannot help feeling that it is very possible you expect more entertainment from the lecture which I have undertaken to give than I fear you will receive. The truth is that the subject of

education is one which at all times is very full of interest, and must necessarily be full of interest, to meetings such as this—to societies such as your own, which are established for the purpose of promoting education amongst the middle classes of a great town like this. But at the present moment one cannot help feeling that there is a peculiar interest attached to the subject on account of the questions which have of late years been raised, and which are now in process of solution, with regard to the education of the middle class, and indeed, I may say, of all classes of the community. But the subject, in truth, is difficult, and may even become dry, just because it is so vast, and so full of material. It is very difficult, indeed, within the limits allowed to a lecturer, to compress all that one would like to say on the subject of our schools in England; and when one has to select certain portions, and endeavour to weave them into a tolerably succinct whole, one is apt to become rather obscure, or, as is too often the case, dull. There is nothing so difficult as abridgment; and attempting to deal with the great question of our English schools in an hour, is something like abridging Hume's 'History of England' into the size of a child's manual. I can assure you I feel very strongly that at the present moment the attention of all classes, especially the great middle class of this country, should be very carefully fixed upon the principles of the education which ought to be given in this country. It is a time at which men's

minds are awaking in one direction or another to the importance of the subject. We know that the Government have measures now in contemplation with a view to inquiring into the condition of middle-class education, and that before very long a Commission will issue which will inquire into the subject. Now it is all very well for the Government in England to appoint Commissions, and for Parliament to discuss questions of this sort. But in a matter which so intimately affects every home in the kingdom, it is neither the Government nor the Parliament that can deal with the question at all satisfactorily. It must be the people themselves—it must be the parents of England themselves who must settle this question; and it is, therefore, satisfactory to find, as I have found in other parts of the kingdom, and as I see by the attendance to-night is the case in Exeter, that the people of England are becoming alive to the importance of the subject, and are anxious to hear what is to be said about it.

I am to-night—though what I have said touches upon middle-class education—to speak to you principally, not so much of middle-class education as of high-class education in this country. You know very well a Commission has lately been inquiring into the condition of some of our superior public schools. You know the report of that Commission is now before the public, and shortly some steps will probably be taken by the Legislature with respect to it. In view

of that, you ought to make yourselves thoroughly acquainted with the general nature and character of that report, as bearing upon the question which you yourselves will have to solve with regard to other schools, because you must remember this, those schools upon which this report is based are for the most part confined to the upper classes of the country. At the same time, there are principles in their management which are equally applicable to middle and lower class schools, and in fact the whole of the schools throughout the country. That which England wants at present is to harmonise the system of education throughout the country—not, of course, to give the same education, but education on the same principles, to all classes; and if you can establish the principles of education to be given to the higher classes, you may determine the principles of education to be given to the middle and lower classes as well. That is, that which may be useful in the one case may not be useful in the other, but if you see why it is useful in the one case, you will perceive the reasons and grounds why it will be in the other. For instance, those questions with regard to the teaching of classics: that is one of the questions which presents itself through all shades and grades of the community. When you come to the question of the higher classes, the question is, Is it worth while to teach boys, who, when they reach manhood are to become barristers, or magistrates, or members of Parliament, or lawyers, to compose Greek verses? In the same way,

when you come to the middle classes, Is it worth while to teach boys who are to become tradesmen, or mechanics, or farmers, or persons in industrial employment, Latin? When you get to the lowest classes, the same kind of question is raised—If the boys are to become ploughmen or day-labourers, is it worth while to teach them reading and writing? for that was the way in which the question used to be presented. Is it worth while, in the education of a boy, to do anything to train his mind and elevate his character in his future occupation in life? Are you to train the boy in order to make him a lawyer or physician, a tradesman or labourer, or are you to train him in order to make him a man? Are you to consider how to develop his moral and intellectual character, or are you to consider how to fit him for his occupation in life? In my opinion, there is no doubt you ought to do both. In the first place, you ought to teach him to develop his qualities as a man; and in the second place, impart to him such knowledge as will be useful to him in his particular occupation or profession.

As the subject of my lecture I have selected more particularly the School Life. Now, the reason why I have done that is this: when we send a boy to school, we wish particularly to form his character and to develop his mind. But how is it to be done? It is to be done partly by instruction, and partly by the habits which you enable him to acquire, and by the life into

which you plunge him. The formation of his character, no doubt, depends very greatly upon his relations with those with whom he is brought into contact —his relations with his schoolmaster, and with his schoolfellows; and it depends also upon his relation to the studies he has to pursue, and the amusements in which he indulges. Now, just let us consider these points one by one. Let us see how the experiences we have gained with regard to the public schools bear upon them one after the other. In the first place, what are the relations in which the boy stands to the masters who are placed over him? What are his relations to a public school? What is a public school? for there one question comes after the other; and that is one of the questions which we find are rather difficult to answer. Dr Moberly, the headmaster of Winchester School, in some very able letters published two or three years ago, has endeavoured to answer the question, and he gives these conditions. "A national or public school," he says, "should be (1) a school of sufficient size; (2) possessed of endowment and constitution so well established as to secure it from the caprices of masters, trustees, proprietors, and the like; (3) in which the dead languages and their literature form the staple of the instruction given; (4) above all, wherein certain of the most trustworthy boys are empowered to exercise some real authority among their schoolfellows, for the purposes of order, morality, and protection, without being

called upon or expected to report continually every act they repress, or every secret they know."

Now, are these altogether the necessary characteristics of public schools? That is a point upon which I reserve my opinion. I will not weary you by going into lengthy details, but will give a few reasons in support of some of the qualities which Dr Moberly thinks should be attributed to every public school. Before doing so, I will say this, that Dr Moberly's definition is not altogether satisfactory to my mind. I have quoted it for this reason: there is no doubt that in our large public schools it is a very remarkable characteristic — whether it is essential to the success of a public school is another question, but, as a matter of fact, the characteristic exists,—that the boys are intrusted with a considerable portion of the government of the school. The reasons which I refer to in support of Dr Moberly's definition are briefly these: (1) A public school should be large, because in being so it affords room for an average public opinion, which opinion would not be liable to be swayed by some one or few boys of more strength than the rest. (2) It should be possessed of an endowment, for so best is provided stability. Precedent, history, established rights, well-understood and well-respected privileges (capable no doubt of legitimate abrogation and change, but secure against caprice or ill temper), seem essential to the full character of a public school. (3) It should perhaps but not neces-

sarily be classical. (4) It should be self-governing to some extent. This causes the consciousness of government and obedience to be felt down to the secret ways and more intimate communications of boys among themselves. Self-government penetrates the inner life of the school, not in a magisterial but in a boyish way. It is administered in well-understood laws, and is exercised by a body of boys who are in many ways a check upon one another, in the midst of a very free and intelligent public opinion.

I will now turn to the question of the influence which the masters have over the boys. This influence must of course be greater over those boys who board with the masters than over those who come only for the day; for while one set of boys are controlled by him all day long and are under his roof through the night, the other set are only under his eye during a few hours. The character of a school depends to some extent on the proportion of day-boys to boarders, and this character has been given to the school generally in its inception. If you look into the history of the great public schools, you will find the origin of them varies very much. In many of them the whole of the scholars were day-scholars; in others, a considerable number of boarders were admitted as well as day-scholars. Take the case of Eton. Eton is a school in which there were boarders from the first. It is a college established for the reception of a certain number of boys, who are housed, fed, and even clothed

at the expense of the foundation; but besides these boys, there are other classes of boys eligible for admission. There are two classes of boys besides the collegers. There are those who are called oppidans, who are invited from all parts of the country, and come to Eton as mere day-scholars. Then there is another class who board in the college, and pay their own expenses. In very early days we find the Cavendishes and other noble families came and boarded in that way. These, however, have now disappeared, while the oppidans or day-boys have largely increased. A new system with regard to them has, nevertheless, sprung up. Formerly they came from every part of England and took lodgings in or near the town of Eton, and attended the school only during school hours, being completely independent of any control when in their lodgings. As the school increased, it became necessary to have assistant-masters, who gradually became tutors, and now those tutors have come to set up lodging-houses of their own, and take in boarders, the boarders they get being the boys who are being tutored by them. The oppidans have changed gradually their character, from being day-scholars to being boarders, but they do not board on the school premises. The same great change has taken place at Rugby, Harrow, and elsewhere. The town of Eton has in fact become an agglomeration of private boarding-schools; and to a great extent the school life of Eton is not the school life of the whole

school, but of one boarding-house or another. This system, while open to a considerable amount of objections, has done a great deal of good. The tutors give their boys instruction over and above the school course; but one great effect has been that the school course at Eton has not been modified, as in the lapse of time it ought to have been, the tutors having to a great extent supplied its defects. A great many books are exclusively read at Eton; but they are by no means enough for boys intended for the universities. I am speaking in the presence of a number of classical scholars, and many of you know better than I do what are the advantages and disadvantages of the course pursued at Eton. With regard to that course, as you know, the writings of hardly any Attic writers at all are read, except small portions of Thucydides; the only Greek authors used being Homer and Theocritus, and this in spite of the fact that no boy can go up to the universities without having read a certain portion of Attic Greek. That want in the school course is, however, supplied by the tutors, who give private lessons to their pupils. The effect of that, though good for the school is bad for the boys, and it illustrates how the disadvantages of the school are met and counterbalanced by the advantages of the tutorial system. One great evil that has arisen through the tutorial system is, that it has caused the establishment at Eton to grow beyond its limits, and become unwieldy and unmanageable. The state of the case

can be seen in the following figures, and the consequences which must follow are apparent from them. Eton is the largest school in England, having 800 boys, whereas Rugby and Harrow each has under 500, and yet in proportion there are many more boys over sixteen years of age at Rugby than at Eton. I mention this as a little saving consideration for the feelings of my Eton friends, who in their sporting matches often find themselves beaten by Harrow. It is often thought to be somewhat strange that Harrow is able to muster pretty frequently a better eleven out of its 500 boys than Eton out of its 800. But the fact is that, although the total number of boys at Eton is so much greater than the total number at Harrow or Rugby, yet the number of big boys is nearly equal in the three schools, and the number of boys over eighteen years of age is considerably less at Eton than at either Harrow or Rugby.

The following are the exact figures, taken from the Appendix to the Report of the Public Schools Commission, page 506 :—

Boys upwards of Sixteen.		*Boys upwards of Eighteen.*	
At Eton . .	227	At Eton . .	26
At Harrow . .	198	At Harrow . .	42
At Rugby . .	222	At Rugby . .	37

The Average Age of the Boys was—

At Eton . .	14 years 11 months.
At Harrow . .	15 „ 4 „
At Rugby . .	15 „ 11 „

It will therefore be evident that a much smaller num-

ber of boys, in proportion to the size of the school, remain at Eton beyond the age of sixteen than remain at Harrow or Rugby. Looked at from a cricketing point of view, this fact is a little consolatory; but in the more essential point of view it is a warning to Eton and Eton men. I am not aware whether I am addressing many Eton men; but the Commissioners have given great offence by finding fault. Still I would ask, Why does not Eton keep pace with Rugby and Harrow? The answer is this, Because parents, finding their boys to be not getting the education necessary to enable them to pass into the university or the professions in a satisfactory manner, consequently remove them at a much earlier age than they would otherwise do. If you inquire further you would find that this is owing to the school being too large. There are matters in the relation between boys and their masters, besides that of learning, which are interesting to consider. Nothing can be more excellent than the encouragement given to the boys to regulate and govern themselves, but very great care must be taken that this is not carried to excess. There is no doubt that some habits acquired under such a system are open to very serious objection; for instance, at Eton there is such a thing as shirking practised under that system. Certain boundaries are prescribed by the rules within which the boys are to move about. These are ridiculously small, and nothing can be more absurd or mischievous than to attempt to keep the boys with-

in them. If a boy is outside these boundaries, and he happens to meet a master, nothing will be said to him, provided he runs into a shop or hides himself in some way. If he does not do so, however, he is punished. The effect of such a practice is to teach the boys that the great harm of doing wrong lies in being found out. Again, the masters labour under the impression that they know a great deal more about the life and feelings of the boys than they really do. It is a very easy thing for the masters to think that everything is going on smoothly—that the boys are conducting themselves like angels; but undoubtedly several cases have come under the notice of the Commissioners which show that the masters are capable of a considerable amount of self-deception. One of these points is no doubt the privilege and immunity of monitors. To take one instance from a practice at Westminster. It appears that there the pupils or junior scholars are placed under the care, to some extent, of the monitors, who are called "helps," at least in this capacity. One practice at that school is, that all the candidates for vacant places in college are presented to the master in the order of their forms. The two lowest boys come up before the head-master, having prepared certain portions of Greek epigram and Ovid's 'Metamorphoses,' which had been set them a certain number of hours before. In preparing these passages they have the assistance of their "helps." The lower of the two boys is the challenger—he calls on the boy whom he chal-

lenges to translate the passage set them, and if he can correct any fault in translating, takes his place. The upper boy now becomes the challenger, and proceeds in the same way. When the translation is finished, the challenger (whichever of the two boys happens to be left in that position) has the right of putting questions in grammar, and if the challenged cannot answer these, and the challenger answers them correctly, the former loses his place. They attack each other in this way until their stock of questions is exhausted. I should like to call your attention to the opinion of the head-master of Westminster in the description of this system which he gave to the Commissioners. He said, "Of course a great deal depended on the ability of the boys, and also on the ability of the 'helps,' who could train an inferior boy so as often to enable him to take places beyond his strength and position. The 'helps' stand by during the challenge and act as counsel to their 'man,' in case there be any doubt as to the correctness of a question or answer, and so forth. The system had many advantages. It brought the young boys together, and introduced relations between the seniors and the juniors of a very praiseworthy character. The seniors from being teachers became protectors to the juniors, and a connection was initiated that very often continued through life, and was very often of great benefit to the parties connected." I have no doubt there is great truth in that, and the master was justified in

saying that there was a great deal to be said for the system. But, on the other hand, when we came, a little later in the inquiry, to examine some of the boys, to examine into certain cases of bullying which were reported to us, and some cases of severe punishment apparently inflicted, we were told that it was the practice for one boy to punish the other by striking him severely with a college cap, or the edge of a book. The boy was made to put out his hand, and received blows with the cap or book. We asked a boy whether that was true, and he said, "That sort of thing is only done by 'helps' in working their boys." We asked what was meant by "working" a boy. He said, "If a boy is idle, of course the 'help' must work him hard. Every boy has a 'help,' who gets £5 worth of books if he gets his boy into college, but he is not paid if he does not get him in." Therefore, on the same principle that the jockey flogs his horse, so the "help," by flogging his pupil, gets him through. And he says, "For the 'help' has to see that he does a certain amount of work, and if he does not do it he 'licks' him occasionally at discretion." That is an instance of the ignorance of the masters of what really goes on amongst the boys. Now I should like to give you another instance, and if you will allow me, I will read a rather racy quotation from the evidence of Dr Saunders, Dean of Peterborough, and one time headmaster of Charterhouse. He describes the state of things at Charterhouse, at the time Dr Russell was

head-master. I may say, in passing, that he speaks very highly of Dr Russell himself. He describes what took place at the time when Dr Russell thought he had made a great improvement by the introduction of the monitorial system at Charterhouse. He says :—

"I was a boy in the school in 1818, in the height of its prosperity. Dr Russell had just introduced the Bell system. The Bell system (the monitorial system) was turning a public school into a national school, making the boys teach each other and govern each other. It had a wonderful effect at first—it captivated people most immensely. We were drawn up before the governors, examiners, and visitors to question each other; we were drilled to handle particular sets of questions which were to be answered before the examiners, Dr Mant and Dr Doyley, who were to boys' ideas rather a little soft. I was præposter myself at one time, and I had been trained to ask these questions, as well as to give these answers, and these gentlemen went away wonderfully struck. . . . The delusion was dissipated in this way, that the boys who had been worked up under it came to be themselves parents and the judges of it. Our parents were taken in and saw what appeared to them the results of this wonderful teaching; but when the sons became old enough themselves to go to the university and to judge of it, down fell the school. . . . It was not governing the school by virtue of age or office, but each separate form had a cocky little fellow who was put at the head of the class and who taught the rest of the boys. Dr Russell reigned 'Jupiter Tonans' over the whole of the school, working himself brilliantly and indefatigably. He thought the work of the school was going on beautifully, but he was certainly taken in by apparent results. On one occasion I remember that the sixth form were danc-

ing to a chorus of Dante instead of construing a play of Sophocles, as he thought. There was a præposter of one form, who being a little mite, but a clever scholar, was put by Dr Russell at the head of the class, but he said it was torture to him above everything; he felt all the responsibilities of his place. Dr Russell would call out, "Fifth form, where is your præposter?' 'Please, sir, here he is;' and they would hold him up by the neck. The boys did not justify at the university the expectations raised of themselves at the school. . . . I should say that Dr Russell was unmistakably an admirable scholar, an indefatigable and excellent teacher himself, if he would have attended to the teaching like other masters."

Dr Russell seems to have been a gentleman who endeavoured to try an amiable plan, but which was not altogether a successful one, in the management of his school. There was one feature about Dr Russell's scheme which Dr Saunders mentions; this was the effort to do away with corporal punishment, and to introduce in its place a system of fines. This did not go down with the boys at all, who stood up for their right to be flogged; and they did it on this principle, that flogging was very gentlemanly, but fines were very ungentlemanly. Dr Saunders says: "We did not like our allowance taken away. There was a famous rebellion of old Carthusians." And when the school really took the matter into their own hands, they set up a general cry of "No fines! no fines!" At last there was what was called a school rebellion, in which Dr Saunders tells us he, for his

part, stood by the head-master and declared for the fines. But the rest of the boys were for corporal punishment; and when Dr Russell found they were so determined upon the point he gave in. Dr Saunders says: "I think after we had this rebellion we had our hearts' content, for the day after abolishing fines, when we all walked into school together, we found a perfect forest of birch-rods, and I should think that the whole school-time of two hours was expended in the use and application of them." This shows the necessity that a schoolmaster should have not only a very good idea on school governance, but should be able to see how to work with the boys, should look a little into their lives, and understand what is going on among the boys; and that in a large school it is a very difficult matter to do. But it is not impossible; and I have no doubt whatever, that if boys are properly looked after, and if a master mixes with them—for he should do so, and yet not too much—if he endeavours to gain their confidence, he may find out their ways and work with them, and may do a great deal in the way of improving the character of the boys with whom he has to deal. Because, after all, when we hear of the mischief which goes on in schools, and the very sad stories which arise either of misconduct in the way of drinking, or some other improper conduct, or again of bullying and idleness and anything else, we must recollect that, after all, school is a reflex of society at large, and that boys

have the same faults as men have. And you cannot but expect that if really left to govern themselves they should sometimes fail, and that we should have shown us a certain number of offenders. What we desire to see in schools is that there should be that sort of relation between the master and the boys, as that boys should be allowed to earn their own experience; that the faults they have in them should be allowed to come up to the surface, but that the master will prevent any serious mischief arising, and that the master will correct and weed out the faults as they are developed by the boys.

I think it might amuse you to mention some of the old regulations in reference to the masters. I observe that in some of the old regulations of some of the old grammar-schools some provision was made as to the relations between the master and the boys; but they were not always such as in the present day might be considered satisfactory. There was one thing very curious indeed I think; and that was that there was a system of what was called "cock-penny." In some schools, notably Manchester, "cock-penny" was a system of payment to the usher or second master, by giving him a certain number of pennies every Shrove Tuesday, when the boys threw them at the cock. The system was that a cock should be taken and buried up to its neck in the ground, and that the boys should throw at it. Provision was made in the statutes of some grammar-schools, for the payment of

the master by what was called "cock-penny." So again I find that in one school there was a rule made that the master was to have the profits of the cock-fights or other amusements amongst the boys. Cock-fighting seems to have been a very favourite amusement at the old schools. At Wreay, in Cumberland, in 1655, a silver bell was presented, to be fought for annually on Shrove Tuesday by cocks. Two boys were chosen as captains. Each produced three cocks, and these went and fought it out. The victor wore the silver bell. That went on till the close of the last century. Several other practices are mentioned; and one is a very curious one, as showing what our ancestors' ideas were of the freedom which boys ought to have. There is, in the statutes of a school in Cheshire—I think I had better not mention the school, because if the statute is still in force the boys may be disposed to put it in practice—this rule, "I will that upon Thursdays and Saturdays, in the afternoons, and upon holidays, they refresh themselves; and a week before Christmas and Easter, according to the old custom, they bar and keep forth the school and the schoolmaster in such sort as other scholars do in great schools." One has heard of "barring-out"; but really to find—and this is not the only case, as I find on reference to old statutes—I say really to find directions by the founders of the school that the boys should one day in the year bar out their schoolmaster, will give an idea of the view held of the

licence and liberties to be allowed to boys, which go rather beyond one's expectations. I should say that Eton was much more humane in these points, when we see at other schools cock-fighting and all sorts of misconduct, and look at the mode in which Eton boys spend their Shrove Tuesday: "On Shrove Tuesday they have a holiday from eight o'clock for the whole day. The cook comes and fastens a pancake to a raven, according to the text, 'He feedeth the young ravens that call upon Him.'" Therefore, I think, though that may provoke a smile, it shows that at all events Eton was a little more civilised. That account is taken from the old Consuetudinarium of Eton College, probably about 300 years old, as far as I can judge, which gives the different occupations of the boys at different times. And really some are so pretty, and show one so nicely the life in school at that time, that I ask your permission to read a few extracts:—

"About the festival of the Conversion of St Paul, at nine o'clock on some day chosen by the head-master, the boys go 'ad montem.' The 'Mons' is to the Eton boys a sacred spot; the beauty of the landscape, the pleasantness of the herbage, the gratefulness of the shade, have led them to consecrate it as the abode of Apollo and the Muses; they celebrate it in their verses, they call it their Tempe, they prefer it to Helicon. Here the novices, or new-comers, who have not yet stood their twelvemonth firmly and like men in the Eton order of battle, are seasoned with the first salt, and are happily described in verses with such wit and humour as may be. Then they

make epigrams against the new-comers [*i.e.*, each other], striving to surpass one another in felicity of expression and in facetiousness. Whatever comes uppermost they may blurt out, so that it be in Latin, so that it be courteous, so that it be free from indecent scurrility. Lastly, they bedew their cheeks and countenances with salt tears, and then at length they are initiated into the rites of the veterans."

That reminds me of a practice we used to have at Eton—I do not know whether it is still continued—that when boys from the lower part of the school entered the Fifth Form they were allowed a certain licence in what they chose to write about those in the Fifth Form, in verse. They wrote a kind of satirical verse describing the Fifth Form boys in their own house. These were sometimes very amusing. The account continues: "Then come speeches and little triumphal processions, and serious rejoicings as well over their past labours as on account of their admission into the society of such pleasant comrades. When all is ended they return home at one o'clock, and after dinner play till eight." Montem was transferred from the Conversion of St Paul to Whitsuntide in 1759, made biennial in 1778, and abolished in 1844. Then, again, this was the course on Easter-eve: "They go to bed at seven, for it was the habit to rise at the third watch in grateful remembrance of the surpassing glory of the death and resurrection of the Lord. Three or four of the senior scholars used formerly to be chosen by the master to take charge of the holy

things, and to watch the sepulchre with lighted candles and torches lest the Jews should steal the Lord's body, or more probably lest some mischief should happen from carelessness with the lights." Then, again, on May-day, the feast of St Philip and St James: "If the master gives leave, and if it is dry, those who choose get up about four o'clock to gather May boughs, provided that they do not wet their feet [they are very careful about that], and they then dress the windows of the dormitory with green boughs, and the houses are scented with fragrant herbs." Then there is a great festival of nutting in September: "They go to gather hazel-nuts, which when they have brought home they give a portion, as if of some noble spoil, to the head-master by whose permission they have undertaken the day's expedition, and then share the rest with the masters. But before they are allowed to gather the nuts they write verses, describing as well as they can the fertility and fruitfulness of the autumn, then lament and upbraid in their most piteous language the killing frost of the approaching winter, the severest season of the year; and thus ever from their boyhood learning the mutability of all things, they cast away their nuts, as the proverb says—that is to say, giving up childish pursuits and trifles, they turn to grave and more serious matters."

Some of those points in the Consuetudinarium of Eton are really very pretty, as showing the kind of life 300 or 400 years ago in an old school of that

kind; and one cannot help feeling that the keeping up of old customs is a great point in the public life of our boys at school, as elsewhere. Therefore one can hardly help regretting, when we read of the festival of the Mons, that the old custom is at last done away with. As you know, it was done away with twenty years ago. It was then a triennial visit, at which many collected. There were many captains of the school chosen; the boys used to go in procession to the Mons, or Salt Hill, and there wave flags and perform one or two other ceremonies. They used also to dine together, and it was a great day of rejoicing which brought all Etonians together. That is one of the old customs which has succumbed, as many others have done, to the new state of the world and the new modes of travelling. It was found that the railway brought down such a large number of persons of a mixed character, that it was necessary to do away with the ceremony on account of the abuses. The same causes led to the putting down of the great Harrow festival of shooting for the silver arrow. Archery was one great sport at the old public schools. In many of the statutes archery and chess were the only games allowed. In the statutes of Shrewsbury School occurs the following: "Shooting in the long-bow and chess play, and no other games unless it be running, wrestling, or leaping. No game to be above one penny, nor match above fourpence, and betting forbidden."

It is curious why the founders selected these two. The practice of archery gave the name to the "shooting fields" at Eton; and at Harrow and other places they have the name of "The Butts." The Harrow practice was to shoot for a silver arrow: "There were twelve competitors, with fancy dresses of spangled satin; whoever shot twelve times nearest to the central mark was victor. Whoever shot within the three inches surrounding the central spot was saluted with a concert of French horns. A ball was held in schoolroom, and attended by the county families." But the practice was suppressed, I think in the year 1771, by Dr Heath, then head-master, in the first place on account of the vast crowd of people, who came, as to the Eton custom; secondly, it induced so much idleness on the part of the intending competitors for the arrow, who got so many exemptions from school duties and claimed them as a matter of right, that it became necessary for the maintenance of school discipline to put the festival down. That was one of the customs we have lost. Here is another custom which seems to have prevailed in some schools—and is a very interesting one. Prizes of silver pens were given to the best scholars and writers at some schools. Here we have the practice as ordained at Lewisham: "And the three best writers and best scholars shall have some pretty garland put upon their head, provided for that purpose, and which they shall wear afterwards upon their hats with their silver pens, well

fastened, for a whole month or six weeks together, and come last and next in order to the master and usher in going to and coming from the public church, whereby they may be known to be the learnedest free scholars of that school." It would a little astonish us now to see boys at public schools going about with pretty garlands and silver pens fastened to their heads. But the spirit which led to these regulations evidently was that of inspiring boys with the desire to distinguish themselves, and to work and gain prizes—the same kind of plan which we find in all schools, and which it is very desirable certainly not to let drop. There was a practice which was something like it, and which was also no doubt the origin of the Westminster challenges. It was the practice of "Victoring." Boys used to go about and challenge boys of other schools to answer questions. One boy used to get upon a bank, and had to answer any question put to him by boys off the bank. If any boy off the bank put a question and the other did not answer it, then the boy on the bank lost his place to the questioner. That kind of emulation was very much encouraged in many schools, and seems to have prevailed at one time to a very great extent; but Dean Connett seems to have forbidden the practice, because it led the boys into mischief and into running about idly.

In Strype's edition of Stowe's 'Survey of London' occurs the following: "I, myself, in my youth, have yearly seen on the eve of the feast of St Bartholomew

the Apostle, the scholars of divers grammar-schools repair unto the churchyard of St Bartholomew, the priory in Smithfield, where, upon a bank boarded about under a tree, some one scholar hath stepped up and there hath opposed and answered till he were by some better scholar overcome and put down; and then the overcomer, taking the place, did like as the first; and in the end the best opposers and answerers had rewards."

I stated that I would say a few words upon the relations of boys to their studies, the effect upon boys of the studies which they have to pursue, and the method in which these studies are pursued; and that is of course a matter of very great importance, and a consideration of very serious character. It is now perfectly obvious that the system which is pursued in many of our public schools, and which has been exclusively a classical system, and which is still pre-eminently a classical system, is seriously challenged by the public. There can be no doubt that if we look at those schools which we are to take as models for the middle-class education of the country, there will be very great difficulty indeed in following and adhering to the example set in the prosecution of classical studies. Because, although these great schools have undoubtedly the classical element so entirely pervading them that it would be impossible to set any other up in its place, it is by no means clear that in a school for other classes that is the only element which

ought to prevail. If you look at the different subjects of education with reference to their power of formation of character, and of improving the mind of a boy, it is by no means so certain that the study of the classics is the only one of which the mind stands in need. No doubt the study of language is one of the noblest and most important of all the studies to which we can devote ourselves. There can be no doubt that as language is the instrument by which we communicate with our fellow-man, it is of the highest importance that we should study the use of that instrument. There can be no doubt, also, that it is of the highest importance to us that we should get the key to all the treasures of thought of former ages, which are locked up for us in the classics. But we must be aware that there are habits of mind which it is essential to cultivate, which may be also cultivated by other studies, and some of which can be better cultivated by other studies than by the classics. There is no doubt that the faculty of observation is one that is neglected far too much in the education of the youth of this country. Boys are all brought up as book learners, and to a certain extent as mathematicians; but boys are not brought to observe the natural objects they see around them; and there can be very little doubt, I think, that that is a great defect in the education we give to English youths, that we do not teach them natural science as we ought to do. When you consider the enormous book of nature laid before us, and

the very slight power which the majority of us have of reading that book, we must feel there is something neglected in the education, which prevents our getting the key to it. There can be no difficulty whatever —that is the concurrent testimony of all able men on this subject—in bringing boys, even of very tender age, to understand the principles of natural science. Not only is it most important that it should be engrafted upon the system of the higher scale of education, but certainly it ought to be a very prominent part of the education of the middle classes. I believe that it is perfectly possible, without in the least derogating from the amount of classical teaching which is given in our higher schools—or ought to be given—and certainly it would be perfectly conformable with the amount of teaching which ought to be given in our middle schools, that a very considerable amount of instruction in the principles of natural science should be given to all.

There is said to be a fear that if the recommendation of the Public Schools Commission be adopted, boys' minds will be overloaded with a number of subjects, of which they can only acquire an imperfect knowledge; that they would be in the condition of the man described by Homer as knowing a great many things, but knowing them all badly. Nothing is more blamable than frittering away the time for education by giving a boy such an education, and teaching him to know all things badly; but I believe

that that is not a danger of which we need be afraid. There is an old saying, even as old as Greece, that there are cases in which the half is better than the whole; and I believe that less time spent upon the mere drudgery of Latin and Greek, but spent in a wiser and more scientific manner by accomplishing a proper amount of teaching in mathematics and natural science, will enable boys to make, not only as much, but more progress, than they do at present by the classical studies. One of the most lamentable discoveries resulting from the inquiry of the commissioners, was, that a great proportion of the average boys that come through the public schools, who have spent their whole time in studying the classics, and have learnt nothing else, have not succeeded even in learning the classics themselves properly. They have allowed themselves to drawl on and drawl on, going through a certain quantity of this, that, and the other book. They have passed through a certain quantity of Latin verses; and yet at the end of their school career they are unable to construe an easy Latin or Greek author, and unable to write a decent piece of Latin prose. If that is the case, I ask—What is wrong? Evidently what is wrong is this,—the proper method of teaching has not been employed. It is supposed that when the mind has been soaked,—and yet it is not soaked, certainly; but a great mass of literary food has been administered without taking care that it has been eaten, much less digested,—all

is done that is required. Boys are often sent to a school, often an unmanageably large one, where certain authors are construed as well or as ill as may be. Owing to the large number of boys, the master is not able to pay much attention to them individually. He may pay attention to those who are quick and wish to learn; these get, no doubt, a great deal of good, and come out very good scholars. But the mass remain perfectly impassive. There is a great power of inattention in boys. Boys have great power of listening and not learning; allowing what they hear to go in at one ear and out at the other. Such boys spend their whole days in hearing the others construing, and in themselves stumbling through with the aid of "cribs," translations perhaps, and other devices. Not only is this doing the boys no good, but it is doing them an infinity of harm; because just as progress in learning the lessons for themselves thoroughly well, and making themselves masters of the subject, is extremely good for their intellect and moral habits, as teaching them to be quick and ingenious, so exactly in the same proportion is the habit of shirking work and listening without learning bad for them, because they gain a habit which is very difficult to lose in after-life. Listening to what is imparted to them without taking it up, and stumbling through their lessons, and doing just enough to satisfy the master without really improving themselves, nothing can be worse for boys than that state of things. Yet I find that is really

too much the state of things at our schools. I believe one great secret is that the masters themselves are not sufficiently trained in the art of teaching; they are ignorant of the real art and science of teaching. I know very well what a great improvement has taken place amongst the lower orders of late years. Anybody acquainted with the advance of education amongst the lower orders must know very well that one of the greatest helps in that advance is the system of training schoolmasters, and teaching them how to teach. Now that will certainly be required in many other classes of schools besides those of the lowest class. I believe myself that it would be extremely advantageous even to the masters of many great public schools. In point of fact they do ultimately learn by sad experience, and at a great expense of their own time, and of the time and labour of a great number of generations of their pupils. I say they do learn it at last, and as they get on become much more experienced and better teachers; but it would be far better that they should themselves study the art of teaching before they undertake to teach, and not as some do, venture to take the care of a school without understanding how to teach a class of boys. I believe if methods of the best kind were employed; if grammar, for instance, were taught upon better principles than are taught in many of our schools, and if a better system were adopted to make boys attentive and make them learn, a great deal more progress would be made

in classics, and at the same time mechanics, modern languages, and physical science might be introduced into the school curriculum. I do not mean to say all these things can be taught at once; but we do know, from what we see in our own children under our care at home, from what we hear of boys at some few specimen schools, and from what we hear of girls, too, at some of the best ladies' schools, that children are quite capable, if properly directed, of acquiring a great amount of miscellaneous knowledge without over-fatigue. I believe it is a rest to the mind and a great advantage for the mind to have greater variety in the subjects set before it.

Then there is another subject which I think is of considerable interest and importance, which is the question how far the examination principle may be applied at the great schools of this country. There is difficulty, certainly, in applying the test of examination to schools of the kind and importance of those which we have recently had to examine into; but it will be very probably found when we look into the question of middle-class schools, that some system of examination will be necessary, in order to test the work of schools and to enable them to test their own working for themselves. The system of examination which has been pursued by the universities recently, by the Society of Arts, and by other bodies, is working well; and I believe will furnish a model upon which you will find it possible to do a great deal for

the improvement of middle-class schools. But we cannot rely too much upon examinations, because they are deceptive. Examinations, after all, can only bring out the results of the best boys in any particular school; and I think that it is very frequently the case that examinations are deceptive, because certain schools distinguish themselves by having a few pupils who pass an extremely good examination. That school gets the credit of being a particularly good school; whereas in other cases a great deal of honest work has been done by the master of a school, and great improvement has been effected, not only amongst his best boys, but on the whole mass of his pupils, but there cannot but a few come forward and distinguish themselves in the same way as the others did. The examination principle will therefore require to be very carefully watched. It is in its essential principle right. It is necessary to have examinations in order to see what a school is doing; but it is necessary not to give it too great prominence, lest it should lead masters to bring forward specimen boys and neglect the great mass of the school. It is very like that at Eton, for instance. If you take Eton and judge of the results by the best specimens of boys who come up for examination, you would say it was extremely satisfactory; for there can be no doubt, I believe, that at Cambridge, at all events, the boys who go up from the college, from the foundation at Eton, are young men who distinguish themselves very greatly at Cam-

bridge. There is no school of late years, since the foundation has been thrown open to competition, which has distinguished itself more, or I might even venture to say, which has done so much as Eton has done at Cambridge. And yet, though there is this satisfactory result, if you look at the higher specimens which Eton turns out, when you look at the average of boys, you find the average extremely unsatisfactory. Therefore it is clear that the mere system of examination, and the mere announcing of where the best boys who go up to college come from, is not enough to enable us to judge of a school. The fact is, in this matter, as in everything else, there is no universal recipe, no "royal road" to learning what you want to know. It is necessary for parents themselves to take this question in hand; to take an interest in the education of their own children; to follow them, as far as possible, through all the stages. It is necessary for parents to use their own judgment, and, where they have the opportunity, to know how the school is really working. They cannot neglect the results of examinations, but they must not depend on and trust to them too implicitly. And they must not depend either upon the work to be done by the schoolmaster, but must remember that after all the boy must not be sent in an unprepared state to school, with directions to turn out the boy as a scholar. You cannot have boys turned out scholars to order; you must do something yourselves if you wish such a satisfactory result to be obtained.

One of the strangest instances I have heard of a parent thinking to throw the whole duty on the schoolmaster, occurred at Christ Hospital. A story is told in the report of the Commissioners who inquired into the education of the lower orders, of some of the inquiries made at this hospital. There, I think, it is mentioned that complaint was made that one child was sent there quite unable even to read; and when the mother of the boy was remonstrated with, and asked how she came to send a boy ten years of age, without having taught him to read, she made answer, "I was always told that this child would have a nomination to Christ Hospital, and I thought you would educate him, and that I had nothing to do with it. I therefore devoted myself to teaching my other children, and left this boy to you to educate." That is a strong instance of what takes place I am afraid, too much, with respect to a great number of boys in all classes of society. The parents take very little pains themselves to educate their children, trusting that when a boy goes to school all will be set right. And it is natural that if they thus take little interest up to the time of the boy going to school, they take comparatively little interest when he is at school; so the master works at a great disadvantage in not having that sympathy and assistance which he might expect from the parents. In addition to this, some parents make unreasonable demands upon the master, and expect things which are utterly impossible; and the

schoolmaster may be tempted to do not what is best for the boy, but what will give most satisfaction to the parent. It is necessary, therefore, that the parent should be wise and understanding in the matter; that he should consider the things in which he is interested himself, and take all the means in his power to understand the working of the school, and to stimulate the master to do that which is right and proper. The parent, after all, knows, or ought to know, what his boy requires, and he should not allow himself to be put off, as parents too frequently are, by the master saying, "You do not understand the question; leave me to educate the boy, and I will do it in the best manner."

I know I have read, since the report of the Commission appeared, that criticisms have been made upon us by schoolmasters. They have said—"Here are gentlemen undertaking to teach the schoolmaster how to do his duty." I may just say that schoolmasters are not much better judges than anybody else may be. Now, schoolmasters are to a certain extent the best judges no doubt; but there is a sense in which a schoolmaster is not the best judge of what is required and what he is doing. No person alone is fitted to be the best judge of his own work. Everybody is better for having another to judge of his work. Really the schoolmaster talked of reminds me of a little dialogue in one of Sheridan's plays between Lord Foppington and his shoemaker, in which his

lordship says, "This shoe is not ugly, but it does not fit." "Oh yes, my lord, it do seem to fit very well." "But it hurts me just on the instep." "No, my lord, it can't hurt there." "Well, but it does; it pinches me terribly." "My lord, if it pinches, I'll be hanged." "But I should think I could tell best. Do you imagine I have no feeling?" "Your lordship may think what you please; but I have made shoes for twenty years, and I ought to know best." The parent must find out where the shoe pinches; and if it is found that the boy is not getting what he requires, and the schoolmaster is not doing him justice, he must not be satisfied till he finds out what is wrong, and till he sees how to alter it, and put it right. The schoolmaster stands in a peculiarly difficult position, and requires all our help and sympathy. There is no doubt in the world the conscientious schoolmaster is in a position of the highest importance. He has intrusted to him the care of youth at the most important season of their lives—for five or ten of the most important years of their lives. He has a great deal to do in the formation of character. He has to deal not only with the best boys, but with the worst boys also. He has, in short, to deal with boys just as they must be, some good, some bad, and some indifferent. He has to deal, as we know, with complaints or indifference on the part of parents. He has also to consider his profession; for if he lives on it, he must make money. He must remember that he

has to live by it; and, of course, questions of self-interest will be continually arising, with which he has to deal. Therefore his position is one of very great difficulty and delicacy. Parents ought to be very careful how they deal with him, and that they should not increase the difficulties under which he labours. But they must be assured, on the other hand, that there is no man that is not the better for being watched and looked after; and parents are doing a real kindness when they point out to a schoolmaster any difficulty and defects they see in the education their boys are receiving. And they will find, I believe, as a rule, that the schoolmaster will be anxious, if they are fairly pointed out, and he sees that parents are not capricious, but really labouring for the good of the boys, and willing to discuss the question on a fair footing—they will find, I believe, that the schoolmaster and parent can work together extremely well, and for the benefit of the boy.

Now I will only say, in conclusion, that I feel I have but opened—and very feebly opened—a number of considerations which I will ask you to apply, and to follow out for yourselves. I think you will find the question will occupy the public mind for a considerable time to come. It is a question, as I said in the beginning, which cannot be settled by Parliament or by the Government. It is a question which must be settled, to a certain extent, by the opinion of parents, and by the people of England themselves;

and it is a question which I invite you to enter upon, and to study for yourselves, with a sincere desire to bring to a satisfactory conclusion the inquiries which are now about to be prosecuted.

FIRST EXTRACT LETTER FROM MR ——.

"*December* 24, 1862.

"MY DEAR SIR STAFFORD,—Your very kind letter deserves my best thanks, and will be remembered by me when the unwonted troubles of this year are over. It often strikes me at Eton that what looks like zeal for reform amongst us, who are considered dangerous bold spirits in the body of the residents, may be, in some measure, zeal for the deliverance from the hardest parts of our old work. We had a little series of discussions some time ago, before we wrote any evidence, and it was as much as one could do to stand up for what is really characteristic of Eton, the tutors' correction of exercises, the process which makes our men at Cambridge (as I am assured on good authority they are) more accurate scholars than Rugby men. The view, which for the time prevailed with us, was that we should not be justified in risking the loss of what we boys and men have at present, a peculiarly strong *objection* to do exercises, and to do them in time, to turn them out in a presentable state, to revise them in the course of a few days, to review the select ones at the end of the school time, to correct the best of the select ones again for the head-master. Nothing can be easier than to pull this to pieces: it is against the grain with many of our good and strong men, who nevertheless persevere under a sense of duty which acts like atmospheric pressure. —— ——, I believe, is as great a supporter of history and 'bookwork' as any Rugby man, or any useful knowledge man: yet he takes as much pains with his pupils' exercises as —— or —— (born versifiers). Every time he signs a copy of verses, he pays a personal attention to the boy, graduated, of course, which supports the boy's virtue. I believe that we might carry out this process in French prose, but I cannot fancy doing so in that kind of bookwork of which we

have at present a sample in our Sunday questions. Nothing can be easier than to get out of boys a vast heap of written stuff copied out of books. This was done by —— for years in the way of Divinity: he got big boating fellows to spend six or eight hours on Saturday and Sunday, covering whole sheets of foolscap with extracts from theological books. This is what some of our men, and many outsiders, would wish to see done with secular history. It would be very nice for us: we should have to look at these masses of manuscript, and perhaps here and there pounce upon a bit of bad spelling; but our minds and hearts would not be engaged as they are now upon what boys bring us from *their* minds and hearts, their verses in which they take the pride of authors. By exacting a great amount of bookwork, and by employing the hours spent in class in passing down questions, and in registering numerically the boys' performances, I believe that we should get through a very plausible amount of work without making one-tenth of the intellectual efforts that we make now, and without being nearly so well acquainted with the characters of the boys. Our young men say that their work should be reduced, that they may have leisure for their own studies. I very much doubt, and I venture to say for our hardest working man, —— ——, that he very much doubts, whether that leisure would be spent profitably as the time now spent with the boys. Of course we ought to have time to learn our lessons: it should not be argued that we must do nothing but books of extracts because the masters have no time to get up fresh subjects. We have time; we have fourteen weeks' vacation. The Marlborough masters, I am told, have a programme of the next term's work ready in the holidays. But our men, who cry out against our "waste of labour" (as if we were not all born to waste and to be wasted, if need be), are not the men who spend their fourteen weeks in making themselves better scholars. Besides the correction of exercises, they (the young men) assist construing. I was asked to give reasons for keeping it up. There is one reason I did not give: it gives us a great check one on another. A man is bound for his honour's sake, and indeed for his worldly success, to construe the lesson right, or else his pupils go into school and expose him: they soon find out in this way if their tutor is a poor scholar, and his business suffers.

Conversely, the master in school hears a passage taken in a way that had not struck him, finds he was wrong, and gets quit of the correction, which does him good without annoying him. These points of difference are often openly stated to the boys, who find that philology is not an exact science, but that it is indissolubly connected with the love of truth, and is best pursued by those who are ready to admit error. Again, a young master having a class of lower boys is saved, partly by construing from becoming a mere usher: he is put on his mettle when he has to do harder lessons (not of his own setting, for if it were so he could stick to a narrow beaten track of books read at college, and they would be his stock in trade for life) with young fellows, of whom, though his pupils, he is somewhat afraid, in whose presence at least he would not like to make a fool of himself. I have written this, I confess, in a spirit of jealous opposition to three or four of those masters whom the Commissioners have examined. I have gone over these arguments with the young men themselves, but I fear they have been giving evidence, likely to be welcome enough, which tends towards the diminution of their work and the relaxation of bonds that have at present great strength.

—— ——."

SECOND EXTRACT LETTER FROM MR ——.

"ETON COLLEGE, *May* 11, 1864.

"MY DEAR SIR STAFFORD,—As far as I can judge from the 'Times,' the Government and the Commissioners, represented in the Commons by yourself, accepted without further inquiry Mr Walpole's assurance that the authorities of Eton are carefully considering the 'recommendations,' and I infer that some importance is attached to the implied promise of voluntary changes to be wrought about here before next session. We have had three meetings at the head-master's house of all the assistants, including the mathematicals, with the head and the lower masters. We have been invited to say what we liked about the recommendations affecting the course of instruction, and we have had fair and satisfactory debates. This in itself is felt by most of us to be a solid gain, due to the

Commission. But no votes are taken, and no minutes. The head-master tells us he merely wishes to hear what we have to say before he makes up his mind. On the other hand, I am informed that the College has, at its regular quarterly meetings, talked over that part of the report which concerns itself, as distinct from the school. I cannot presume to say what the Provost and the head-master do by themselves; but I apprehend that the result of *their* deliberations will be submitted to the Government in some form or other. I feel very strongly that if you allow Eton to reform itself, you should insist on some weight being given to the assistants in council—at least, to some of them selected by the whole body to confer with the authorities. If this cannot be ensured, then I trust you will remember next session that the persons who gave evidence to the Commission in favour of reform have not been really, though they have been seemingly, taken into council. In thanking you, however late, for the blue-books, which I have begun to read, when I came back after the holidays, I cannot deny myself the opportunity of expressing my disappointment at the contents. I see with regret that you take the utilitarian view of modern languages, and I heartily agree with Mr Gladstone's felicitous argument for Italian, and with Mr Vaughan's unanswerable distinction between French and German. I regret that the literary treatment of physical science is passed over, and its bearings upon composition: holding, as I do, that if boys were taught on Ruskin's principles (see Appendix to 'Stones of Venice'), they would write far better compositions, and would be far less superstitious and frivolous. I regret that you make no provision for paying us for our school work, or improving our position in any way.—Believe me, yours truly, —— ——."

EXTRACT LETTER FROM MR GLADSTONE.

"11 CARLTON HOUSE TERRACE,
June 4, 1864.

"MY DEAR NORTHCOTE,—Many thanks for your note respecting the Public Schools Bill. I will speak to Clarendon. But I confess I do not think your note embraces the whole case. Nor do I

understand the effect of the Bill to be that no regard would be had to the special case of persons appointed in this interval; but that the doctrine of vested interests, which we carry to lengths perhaps on the whole expedient, but still in many cases most inconvenient in practice, would be set up in these cases in its most unbending rigour, but should rather give place to more general considerations of equity.—In haste. Sincerely yours,

"W. E. GLADSTONE."

Connected with this subject, we find two allusions in Sir Stafford Henry Northcote's letters to Lady Northcote in the spring of 1864. The first in a letter dated January 30, 1864:—

"2 VICTORIA STREET.

"I came up here this morning by an early train in hopes of signing our Report; but at the very last moment Vaughan has refused to sign without a protest, and as Twisleton has gone abroad, leaving Bernard his authority to sign for him on the understanding that there were to be no protests, we cannot proceed without communicating with Twisleton again, and what may ultimately grow out of the affair no one can tell. I am going out to The Grove with Lord Clarendon, and look forward to my visit, though I was very sorry to leave Burghley so soon."

The second mention occurs in a letter addressed to Lady Northcote on March 9, 1864:—

"*From* DEVONSHIRE PLACE.

"You will be astonished to hear that our Public Schools Report has actually been presented! Vaughan's dissent is clever and interesting, but I don't think will do us much good."

VII.

ON NOTHING.

A LECTURE

DELIVERED AT THE

CONVERSAZIONE OF THE EXETER LITERARY SOCIETY,

JANUARY 19, 1884.

THE hall had been prepared for dancing, and none of the surroundings were meant for a grave entertainment—the room having been cleared of seats and furniture in preparation for the soiree. Sir Stafford Henry Northcote had had an interrupted Christmas holiday. A few days previously he had been at home and out shooting with some of the members of his family. One of the party by accident fired a shot very close to Sir Stafford, upon which an exclamation was made by the rest to "take care." Sir Stafford turned round with an amused smile, saying: "It is rather an illustration of the story of the man who shot at nothing and missed it." In the same week he went to London for a few days, and returned on the 18th January. When he came back, he said, "I have been so pressed for time, that I have not been able to think what I am to say to-morrow night. I really have thought of nothing. I think I shall choose it for my subject." After the lecture he stayed with Lady Northcote for some of the dancing, and joined in it.

"'What are you doing, Joe?' said I.
'Nothing, sir,' was his reply.
'And you there, Tom, pray let me know?'
'I'm busy, sir; I'm helping Joe.'
'Is nothing then so hard to do
That thus it takes the time of two?'
'No,' said the other with a smile,
And grinned and chuckled all the while;
'But we're such clever folks, d'ye see,
That *nothing's* hard to Joe and me.'"

"Me the contented mind desires,
The poor man has, the rich requires,
The miser spends, the spendthrift saves,
And all must carry to their graves."

ALTHOUGH I knew for some time that I was to have the pleasure of meeting you to-night, and that it was right that I should make some observations to you, yet it was only last night, with my terrible habits of procrastination, that I began to think upon what subject I should interest you, and I found myself in the very greatest difficulty. A great many subjects suggested themselves, but there was no time to prepare them, and at the same time it was not reasonable or quite respectful to a body such as those who compose the Exeter Literary Society that I should come unprepared upon any subject which would require consideration. I remember very well some years ago, when the late Bishop of Exeter, Bishop Phillpotts, was at the Cathedral on the occasion of a service for the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, it was intended that a Colonial Bishop should preach the

sermon; but there had been some mistake about the day, and the Colonial Bishop did not come. "Well," they thought, "he will come later; he has missed the train, perhaps," and the service began. But the Bishop had not made his appearance when the time for the sermon approached, and there was great searching of heart. Finally, Bishop Phillpotts said that he would go up into the pulpit and see whether he could offer something of a sermon. He did so. Of course, he had been taken by surprise, and he therefore began with an apology for the apparent want of respect to his congregation, and expressed a hope that his clergy would not generally follow his example by addressing their congregations in an unprepared state. I parallel that story with one I recently heard of a case in which one of the great French preachers (Massillon), in the time of Louis Quatorze, was directed by the King to preach a sermon to him. He asked what text he should choose, and the King told him he would find his text on a piece of paper in the Bible when he got into the pulpit. The preacher went into the pulpit and drew out the paper, when, behold! it was blank on both sides, upon which he held it up to the people, and said, "There is nothing on one side; there is nothing on the other; and that, my friends, is an illustration of how out of nothing we came and into nothing we go," and upon that theme he preached his sermon. Well, I thought I might venture to take a hint from the French bishop. I remembered, however,

a piece of advice once given me by a great parliamentary authority, whose name, as we are not political, I won't mention; but no doubt you will guess. I remember asking him on one occasion during a debate, "Shall I speak next?" and he said, "Have you anything to say?" I replied, "No; I have nothing to say." "Well," he said, "say nothing." And I applied that sentiment in this way: "I have nothing to lecture upon," said I, "Well, lecture upon Nothing." I shall not be the first person who has ever attempted to treat "Nothing" in a serious manner. There was a poem, a very clever poem, written by the witty Lord Rochester, the friend of Charles II., addressed to "Nothing." That poem, even, was not the first of the kind; a Frenchman, I believe, had some centuries earlier written a Latin poem on "Nothing," which, however, was of a very ordinary description. You will find it in Dr Johnson's 'Lives of the Poets.' But it only amounts to this—that nothing is richer than gold, nothing is purer than water, nothing is higher than the heavens, and so forth. But Lord Rochester wrote something rather superior to that. I have extracted one or two of his lines, and they are not bad. He began by addressing Nothing:—

"Nothing, thou elder brother even to shade,
Thou hadst a being ere the world was made;
And, well-fixed, art alone of ending not afraid.
Great Negative, how vainly would the wise
Inquire, define, distinguish, teach, devise,
Didst Thou not stand to point their dull philosophies!'

And then there are some lines which perhaps are not quite complimentary to my pursuits:—

> "While weighty Something modestly abstains
> From Prince's coffers and from Statesmen's brains,
> And nothing there like stately Nothing reigns."

But really, when one comes to consider how the subject was to be treated, the cloud of thoughts that came upon me was very embarrassing. One might treat it as the subject of a very deep and serious lecture. If one had time, and sufficient knowledge of modern philosophy—the philosophy of Huxley, Darwin, and Herbert Spencer, and of other great writers—it would be very interesting indeed to pursue the question something upon the lines, though probably in a very different manner adopted by the French bishop of whom I have spoken. I shall not attempt to take you into that kind of reasoning; perhaps it would be too hard and dry for the evening, and certainly I should be very incompetent to undertake it. I will only quote, if you will allow me, an epigrammatic sentence of a friend of mine upon the subject, Lord Beaconsfield, when he said with regard to some of these theories, "They seem to me to go upon the principle that the world is all nonsense, and I don't believe in nonsense." But if you don't treat it in that way—if you look to the philosophy of the matter—look to Bishop Berkeley's philosophy, for instance. Bishop Berkeley was a man whose princi-

pal contention was that there was no proof of the existence of matter, except the sense of those who perceive it—no matter unless you perceive it. That he argued out very ably, and his object was to argue down the materialists of his day, who made matter to be something independent of the Creator; but everybody took it up as showing that Bishop Berkeley proved that there was no matter, and as Lord Byron has said—

> "When Bishop Berkeley said there was no matter
> And proved it, 'twas no matter what he said."

I don't intend, however, to go into the question of Bishop Berkeley; nor, indeed, would I go into the great question of science. I daresay many of you have seen some of the old records of the great controversy which stirred and agitated the world from about the days of Aristotle to the days of Sir Isaac Newton—as to whether it was true or not that Nature abhorred a vacuum; and I believe that more heads were broken in one way or another—either by quarrelling or by hard fighting—over that subject than over almost any other, except, perhaps, perpetual motion. Perhaps I may mention the saying which passed with regard to that by Galileo. It was Galileo who said that Nature abhorred a vacuum till she got 32 feet from the ground, when she withdrew her objection. But we won't go into that now. It is, however, a matter which might also be discussed. Again, there

are other matters which we might, if we were disposed, discuss. We might go into politics, and might discuss the meaning and nature of what is called "Nihilism," which proposes to destroy everything—to make a clean sweep of everything, and to leave what is to be put in its place to be decided afterwards. That would be a very interesting subject for reflection; and as I don't doubt that there are many within my hearing who are competent and willing to devote their time to the preparation of lectures, I hope those who are listening to me will consider that in what I am now saying I am throwing out hints, giving out ideas, which may be taken up by those who have more time and opportunity than I have to follow them up, and perhaps construct a lecture or a series of lectures. Yet there is another line which might be followed. Nothing suggests the melancholy condition of all those who have nothing. It might, indeed, be a topic; it might be a sort of text for those who desire to call attention to the condition of the circumstances of the extremely poor. May I quote you a line or two from a translation of one of the Roman writers—one of the Roman satirists—in which he describes the condition of a man in extreme poverty (after a fire):—

> "Codrus, in short, had nothing. You say true,
> And yet poor Codrus lost that nothing too."

I think a more melancholy idea could hardly be suggested than that of a man who had nothing; and yet

when he came to lose it, he found that he had something—though anybody would have said, as he had not anything, that there was nothing he could lose. And yet there is that to be said which is consolatory with regard to nothing. Dr Johnson says: "I fear not thieves; I have nothing, and nothing is a very powerful protector." So that there is something to be said on the side of nothing. It is not my intention to enter into the subject from any of these points of view. But a very few words you will permit me to say from one more point of view—that is as a matter of conduct, and in reference to what is sometimes known in a complimentary sense, and is sometimes sneered at with rather satirical intention—what is called in politics "masterly inactivity." Masterly inactivity is the art of sitting still and not committing yourself in any action at a time when it is not convenient you should do so. It means waiting for your turn—waiting for your particular opportunity—waiting, in fact, in a manner that will embarrass your opponent and not commit yourself. For very often by acting too quickly you are giving impulse to forces which, if you leave them alone, will exhaust themselves and do no harm. Masterly inactivity is an excellent principle; but you must take care it is masterly, and that it does not arise from indolence or timidity, or from not knowing your own mind. And with regard to the great principle of silence, you know the old saying that "Speech is silver, and silence is gold.'

Well, silence undoubtedly is gold. If silence, so to speak, proceeds from knowledge or feeling, or from some other good reasons, it is very different from silence which proceeds from not knowing what to say, or from absence of thought. But do let me say a few words about this matter of silence. I will take an example or two of it. There was the great case of William the Silent—William of Orange, a man who planned the great movement that set free the Netherlands from the Spanish yoke in the sixteenth century. Well, that was the case of a man who knew how to keep his own counsel, who never committed himself, and in times of the greatest difficulty, when most careful judgment was required, and when a false step might have been fatal to him, he contrived by his great power of keeping his own counsel and keeping silence to win for himself the confidence of the people, and accomplished objects he had set on foot. Now I am going to give you as a companion picture to William —I am going to give you a character which is not historical, though which may be historical—but we know her not from history, but from the great drama of Shakespeare. One of the greatest instances of silence was Cordelia, the daughter of King Lear. I suppose there is no character in any of Shakespeare's plays that produces more wonderful effect on the imagination and feelings of those who read or see his plays performed, with so few touches or strophes or so few words spoken, than Cordelia. I was looking at a comment

upon the play, and I see it is noticed that in the first act Cordelia has only forty-three lines assigned to her. She does not appear again till the fourth act, in the fourth scene of which she has twenty-four lines, and in the seventh, thirty-seven. In the fifth act she has five lines. Yet, during the whole progress of the play we can never forget her, and after its melancholy close she lingers about our recollections as if we had seen some being more beautiful and purer than anything on earth, who had communicated with us by a higher medium than that of words. Her beauty consists largely in her silence. Of course, as I have said, there is silence sometimes from want of thought. It may take the form of absolute silence, or it may take the form, as we know, of whistling. As Dryden told us of one, "he whistled as he went along from want of thought." There is a celebrated character in a song which I daresay many of you know, for it is the very popular song of "The Jolly Young Waterman." That he could row along thinking of nothing at all was a trait in his character which people have praised very much, as showing what a pure and untroubled mind his must have been that he could row along without thinking of any troublesome matters. It is not that kind of silence, of course, of which I am speaking. But there is a good deal in that phase of nothing. There is a certain amount of beauty, a certain amount of attractiveness in doing nothing, not by great thoughts or grand plans, but simply because it

does not come to you to do anything. It is that sort of idleness which the Italians call the *dolce far niente.* It is what one of our great poets speaks of when he says that—

> "Narcissus is the glory of his race,
> For who does nothing with a better grace?"

There is a certain amount of beauty in that kind of indolence—that graceful indolence—but we must take care that if we thus worship nothing we must keep nothing in its proper place, and that we don't confuse something with nothing and allow nothing to take the place of something real. For instance, those who give themselves up to day-dreams and castle-building in the air—those are persons who are allowing nothing to assume in their lives the form, shape, and substance of something, and they almost invariably come to grief. You remember, I daresay, the story of the dairymaid going to market—going to market and calculating how much she would make of her basket of eggs, and the stages by which she meant to become a great lady, when she would be able to treat her servants with contempt, and then, suiting the action to the thought, gave a kick which upset the basket, broke all the eggs, and destroyed the whole fabric. That is a sort of character Sir Walter Scott describes when he speaks of those who are subject to day-dreams and the visions of fancy. This is the beautiful language in which he describes a youth

carried away by these dreams of fancy, and neglecting the calls of the realities of life:—

"Woe to the youth whom Fancy gains,
Winning from Reason's hand the reins,
Pity and woe! for such a mind
Is soft, contemplative, and kind;
And woe to those who train such youth,
And spare to press the rights of truth,
The mind to strengthen and anneal,
While on the stithy glows the steel!
O teach him, while your lessons last,
To judge the present by the past;
Remind him of each wish pursued,
How rich it glowed with promised good;
Remind him of each wish enjoyed
How soon his hopes possession cloyed!
Tell him, we play unequal game,
Whene'er we shoot by Fancy's aim;
And, ere he strip him for her race,
Show the conditions of the chase.
Two sisters by the goal are set,
Cold Disappointment and Regret;
One disenchants the winner's eyes,
And strips of all its worth the prize;
While one augments its gaudy show,
More to enhance the loser's woe.
The victor sees his fairy gold,
Transformed, when won, to drossy mould,
But still the vanquished mourns his loss,
And rues, as gold, that glittering dross."

I know that this is not an evening for anything of a serious lecture, and it is not one on which I ought to detain you for any length of time. I will therefore only ask your permission just to read to you a few

lines from a passage in Shakespeare which bears on the whole matter—a passage from the 'Tempest,' which you know very well:—

> "And, like the baseless fabric of a vision,
> The cloud-capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces,
> The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
> Yea, all which it inherits, shall dissolve,
> And like an unsubstantial pageant faded,
> Leave not a rack behind."

I do not think, ladies and gentlemen, that the subject so hastily and briefly laid before you is one altogether devoid of interest; and I think, if you will endeavour for yourselves to follow out some of these thoughts I have endeavoured to suggest, and will add to them other thoughts which I have no doubt will occur to yourselves, you will find that you have matter for very agreeable and profitable occupation. You will not think it very frivolous—at least I hope not—if in addition to the other quotations I have given I now give you a riddle which comes from one of our children's old books:—

> "Before creating Nature willed
> That atoms into forms should jar;
> By me the boundless space was filled,
> On me was built the first-made star;
> For me the saint will break his word,
> By the proud Atheist I'm revered;
> At me the coward draws his sword,
> And by the hero I am feared.

Scorned by the meek and humble mind
  Yet often by the vain possessed;
Heard by the deaf, seen by the blind,
  And to the troubled conscience rest.

Than Wisdom's sacred self I'm wiser,
  And yet by every blockhead known;
I'm freely given by the miser,
  Kept by the prodigal alone;
As vice deformed, as virtue fair,
  The courtier's loss, the patriot's gains;
The poet's purse, the coxcomb's care;
  Guess—and you'll have me for your pains."

Ladies and gentlemen, the solution I leave to you. I have been speaking to you about nothing, but it is possible that in the course of my remarks I may have been thought to have suggested something. Some time ago there was a case in which a gentleman was alarmed at night by hearing noises which he thought indicated the approach of burglars to his house. He was a very quiet and nervous man. He had never fired off a gun in his life, but he kept a loaded gun for the protection of his house. He went down-stairs and opened the door, and hearing a noise he thought he would give an alarm. He fired the gun at random, he did not hear any further noise, he thought all was right, and he returned to bed. In the morning it turned out that a person who had been coming into his grounds for a perfectly innocent purpose had been shot and was lying dead. The unfortunate man who had fired the gun was brought up for trial, and his

explanation was that he really did not know there was anybody there; he did not aim at any one, he merely fired for the sake of alarm, but had been unfortunate enough to hit some one, all of which the counsel summed up very pithily by saying, "My lord, the truth is this: this gentleman shot at nothing, and he missed it." Perhaps I have done the same.

VIII.

THE CLOSING OF THE EXCHEQUER BY CHARLES II. IN 1672.

A LECTURE

DELIVERED TO

THE LITERARY SOCIETY, EXETER,

DECEMBER 6, 1865.

THE subject of finance was one which deeply interested Sir Stafford H. Northcote. In 1862 he had published a book called 'Twenty Years of Financial Policy.' But what had probably suggested to him the idea of lecturing upon the closing of the Exchequer was the fact that, in the session of 1865, a Bill had been somewhat hastily put before the public notice with regard to the amalgamation of the offices of the Controller of the Exchequer with the chairmanship of the Board of Audit, owing to the contemplated retirement of Lord Monteagle from the latter office. This Bill was introduced by Mr Peel, then Chancellor of the Exchequer—Lord Robert Montagu, Sir Francis Baring, Sir Stafford Northcote, Sir Minto Farquhar, and Mr Henley taking an active part in the debate. The following is an extract from Sir Stafford Northcote's speech: "The real subject for consideration was, what should be the arrangement for securing the right appropriation of the public money? They had at present three offices—the Treasury, the Exchequer, and the Audit Office, with certain functions

divided between them, those functions being derived from very ancient times. As those functions, however, had of late years, from the condition of affairs, become greatly changed, he thought it was advisable that their position should now be revised. It was especially worthy the consideration of the House whether there any longer existed any real necessity for keeping up the department of the Exchequer at all. If they looked for a moment at the real question between Parliament and the Government, they would see that Parliament granted to the Government certain sums of money for executive purposes, and that Parliament possessed two pieces of machinery, the Exchequer and the Audit Office, intended for the control of the Government in the expenditure of the money which had been placed in its hands. The consideration and adjustment of any changes in these modes of controlling the expenditure of the Government was a matter, therefore, of great importance, and one which the present Parliament was scarcely in a position to deal satisfactorily with."

I HOPE the subject I am about to bring before you to-night may claim the epithet of "interesting." I fear that it will not be entitled to the other epithet which your president has, by anticipation, bestowed upon the lecture you are to hear next week, "sensational." You cannot always have sensational lectures — you must be prepared sometimes to enter upon grave and comparatively dull matter. Now I am going to-night to ask your attention to a historical question.

There are, I think I may say, two methods in which history may be studied. You may either study history by making yourselves acquainted with great works containing a complete history of the world, or

of particular countries, composed upon what may be called the analytic principle—viz., as a record of the events of each year in succession; or you may study history by taking particular branches of historical science and endeavouring to follow them up separately. You may study, for instance, the history of politics, or the military progress of a nation, or you may take the financial history, or the constitutional history, or the history of arts and science, or some other branch of general national interest. I think that no person can properly study history who does not follow both these methods.

It is necessary that we should, in the first instance, have a general idea of, so to speak, the map of the country we are to study. Then, that we should have more minute information, pursuing some particular track, and endeavouring to follow it out and connect it with the general features of the country we are investigating. If we are to follow such tracks, I think I am not making a very bold assumption when I say you can hardly take any special historical topic, if I may so describe it, for a subject of study so well calculated to throw light upon the political condition of any country as its financial history; because, however persons may differ as to what are the recognised objects for which states are formed, and however we may doubt as to whether this, that, and the other object fairly falls within the purpose of the state, there can be no doubt that the management of the

public finances is one of the objects for which states are constituted. If you wish to ascertain what the real spirit of a country is, what the real power of the different authorities which exist in the country is, you cannot very well study that more satisfactorily than by ascertaining what the financial system of the country is, to what kind of taxes the people submit, what amount of revenue it is possible to raise from them, by whose authority that revenue is raised, how much the people themselves have to say to the manner in which the revenue shall be taken out of their pockets, and what right they have to interfere or exercise any control over the manner in which that revenue is expended.

If that is true of countries in general, especially is it true of this country of our own; because, if you look back upon the great course of English history, you will see that nearly all the revolutions and changes which have taken place in our form of government have more or less connected themselves with one or two great subjects—they have either originated from questions of religion or from questions of finance. In most countries this will probably be the case. If you undertake to examine the financial system of England as compared with the financial system of any other country, you will find you have undertaken a more complicated inquiry, and that there is much in our system which is, at first sight, apparently anomalous and difficult to understand; and the reason of that is

this—the constitution of England, and the financial constitution amongst other parts of it, is not the mere product of the brain of a lawgiver, not anything struck off in the heat of the moment, but is the growth of ages, for the genius of the English nation has always been not to cast aside the old and begin on an entirely new foundation, but to improve, to alter, to amend, or in some way to modify that which has gone before. So we see in all parts of our constitution, and in our financial affairs as much as in any other part of it, the traces of bygone times and bygone struggles. Embodied in the very words and language which we use, if you go into the depths of the subject, you will see these tracks going back to times very far indeed removed from the present.

The study of the financial history of England is a most important and interesting study, and will throw great light upon the changes which from time to time have taken place in the constitution of England, in the power of the sovereign, in the power of the Parliament, in the power and rights of the people. Were it in my power to enter completely into the subject, and if you would admit such a thing as an entire course of lectures upon the subject, it is perfectly certain they might be made very interesting; but that is out of the question for both of us.

In studying a subordinate branch of history like the financial history, you may begin from early times, and endeavour to trace the course of our financial system from the era of William the Conqueror down-

wards, and taking some particular salient point, you may endeavour to investigate that, and ascertain what are the consequences that grow out of it. That is the plan I propose to follow to-night. I may diverge and ramble from the narrow point announced as the subject of my lecture, and therefore make these preliminary remarks in order to show that my object is rather to give a general view of the financial system of England, and the changes which have taken place in it since the Norman Conquest, than to give a mere account of the special transaction to which I shall venture to call your attention. However, I would observe that that special transaction is one which is extremely interesting—it is a sort of crisis in the history of England.

Nothing can well be more different than the system of the Norman financial administration and the administration under Queen Victoria. In the changes which have taken place from time to time, there are several epochs which ought to be taken special notice of; but there is no epoch of so much importance as that which extends from the commencement of the civil war between Charles I. and his Parliament, and the Revolution in 1688. It was during that period, or rather at the time of the breaking out of the civil war between King Charles I. and his Parliament, that the old feudal system, upon which the financial system of England rested, received its greatest blow. After the Restoration there was an attempt made on the part of King Charles II. and his Ministers to return, as

far as might be, to some of the traditions of the old system. This attempt was made at the period of what is called the Cabal Administration. That administration was composed of five members, the initial letters of whose names formed the word Cabal—Clifford, Ashley, Buckingham, Arlington, and Lauderdale. This was the administration which most earnestly endeavoured to turn back the tide, and to render the King, as far as possible, independent of his Parliament. The measure which they adopted, the closing of the Exchequer, was the boldest measure they took. It may be taken as a crisis of the experiment, which had for its object the rendering of the King independent of his Parliament, and the government of England on principles to which the mass of the nation was opposed. That act turned the tide flowing in favour of the monarchy since the Restoration in 1660, gave the power to what was called the country party, and drove out the partisans of the Duke of York (afterwards James II.), who were very powerful in the Cabal Administration; and it turned the tide so far, that it set more and more in the direction of the rights of the Parliament and of the people, until the Revolution of 1688.

You will see, therefore, that the measure to which I am about to call your attention was an important crisis in the constitutional as well as in the financial history of England. It is an important point also in financial history, because this was the measure which was undertaken in consequence of certain changes

which had just been introduced into the mode of auditing the public accounts, with the view of giving Parliament greater control over the moneys granted by it for the public service, and because it laid the foundation of our national debt. It is a curious fact that the money which was taken from the goldsmiths in the Exchequer, when the Exchequer was closed, is at this time still owing, and is the only part of our national debt which was incurred before the Revolution. It connects itself with a good many changes made in our financial system, and is, consequently, a point we may very fairly take as a convenient point of departure, which raises a number of questions we may interest ourselves in investigating, as far as we have time to do so. I presume that most of you are acquainted generally with the circumstances of the transaction, but it may be advisable that I should briefly recapitulate them.

It was in the year 1672 that the Cabal Ministry were in power. Parliament was not sitting, and it was their object to break up the old alliances of the kingdom, in conformity with an arrangement made between King Charles II. and Louis XIV., King of France, to engage the two countries in a war with Holland. The Ministry formed a plan for attacking the Dutch fleet, then coming home from Smyrna laden with merchandise, and thereupon declared war. It was necessary to find the means for carrying on the war. To call Parliament together, and ask it for

supplies for that purpose, would not have done, because the Parliament would have been decidedly opposed to the measures contemplated by the King. Therefore, we are told, the King applied to his Ministers for some suggestion as to the mode in which he could raise money, and offered the staff of Lord Treasurer — the office being vacant — to the Minister who would discover a plan for raising the requisite funds.

Sir Thomas Clifford, one of the Commissioners of the Treasury, proposed the closing of the Exchequer and the impounding of the money the goldsmiths had placed there. With this money the fleet could be fitted out, and the war carried on. This suggestion was adopted, and the money seized was about a million and a quarter. The attack was made on the Dutch fleet, but was only very partially successful; war was declared; and Sir Thomas Clifford received his reward by being made Lord Treasurer.

The goldsmiths' customers, who were brought to very great distress by the measure, proceeded to bring actions against the goldsmiths, to whom they had intrusted their money. The first attempt was to obtain what is called an injunction in the Court of Chancery, to prevent people suing the goldsmiths for the money owing to their customers if impounded by the King. The then Lord-Keeper, Orlando Bridgman, declined to grant the injunction, as being out of his power. Sir Ashley Cooper—afterwards Lord

Shaftesbury—treated the difficulty with great contempt. He said the thing could be done easily, and if he were made Chancellor he could do it. He was made Chancellor, with the title of Lord Shaftesbury, and to a certain extent he proceeded to carry out the suggestions he had made. He granted an injunction, but it was not in proper form. He also suggested that an appeal should be made at a future day, and nothing more was heard of that part of the proceedings.

In the meantime the King, being importuned by the persons who had suffered such great loss, charged his hereditary excise with the annual payment of six per cent on the money he had seized. That payment continued during the whole reign of King Charles II., till within a year of his death. It then stopped, and was suspended during the reign of James II. At the time of the Revolution, the customers of the goldsmiths came forward and applied for the arrears of interest. They brought forward a case in the Court of Exchequer, obtained a verdict, and the sums were ordered to be paid to them. The Crown, under William III., appealed against this to the Court of Exchequer Chamber, and the decision was reversed. Ultimately Parliament passed an Act which compromised the matter by giving the goldsmiths from that time, 1705, one-half of the interest to which they were entitled under the original arrangement, subject to putting an end to it on payment of half the amount seized.

That is a general outline of the transaction. There are many questions which arise and immediately suggest themselves when we listen to this outline. In the first place, What was the Exchequer? How came the money of the goldsmiths there? How was it that this was the fund to which the King and his Ministers looked as most available? How was it that the King charged his hereditary excise with the payment to be made to the creditors when he acknowledged their rights? How was it the Parliament under William III.—a monarch generally considered to be scrupulous of all that related to the rights of the people—resisted this arrangement? And I may also say, What was the immediate and ultimate consequence of these measures? We may further ask, What is the present state of affairs, and how far would it be possible for similar steps to be taken now, supposing we had Ministers or a sovereign disposed to do that which Charles and his Ministers did? You see the kind of questions which open upon you when you begin to study any single transaction; and if you follow out all the questions, if you follow out all the different ramifications of them, you will find a work upon your hands which will take up a great deal of time, and introduce you to a great deal of very interesting matter.

I will endeavour, as far as time will allow, to discuss some of these questions; and in the first place, What was the Exchequer? Now I daresay some may say, "It is a rather foolish question. We all know

what the Exchequer was;" but I venture to say that if I cross-examined any one disposed to say that, I should find him a little loose in his views as to what the Exchequer was. I say that with less reluctance, because I know that the present year a noble lord who sat for a very great number of years as a distinguished lawyer in the House of Commons, who was Solicitor-General, Attorney-General, and afterwards became Lord Chancellor, and who was engaged in a judicial inquiry in the House of Lords before a Committee which sat with reference to those frauds in the Patent Office by Mr Edmunds, of which you have all heard, was altogether puzzled upon the subject of what the Exchequer is now. He supposed it to be the Treasury, or a branch of the Treasury; and when it was explained that it was neither the Treasury nor a branch of the Treasury, he ultimately came to this conclusion, that the Exchequer seemed a great mystery. Well, the Exchequer, even in the days of Queen Victoria, is a great mystery, it seems; but the Exchequer in the days of Charles II. was something very different from what it is now, and something very different indeed from the original Exchequer in the days of William the Conqueror. Therefore I may be allowed, without insulting the superior knowledge of those amongst you who do know what the Exchequer history is, to point out what the Exchequer was, and what it afterwards became.

Now, in the days of the Norman sovereigns, the Court of Exchequer was a part of the great AULA

REGIA, the great Court of the King; and it was in fact the corner-stone of the administrative as well as of the financial and the judicial system of the kingdom. I am afraid I cannot thoroughly make you understand what the functions of the Court of Exchequer in early days were, without showing what the nature of the revenue of the early sovereigns of England was. The revenue of the sovereigns of England in the days of the Norman dynasty was very different from that in the present day. Blackstone, in his 'Commentaries,' tells us that the revenue of the King may be divided into two branches—ordinary and extraordinary; and he divides the ordinary revenue of the King into, I think, eighteen different subdivisions, including such things as these—first-fruits of benefices, the temporalities of vacant bishoprics, and a number of ecclesiastical benefices of that kind, the profits of the Crown lands, the profits of feudal tenures, the rights of purveyance, wrecks, mines, the custody of lunatics, and a variety of other matters which belonged to the King as the feudal sovereign of England, and owner of the land of England, and which all brought money into the coffers of the King; and secondly, there was an extraordinary revenue, which was what we should now rather call the ordinary revenue—imposts or taxes. Now these imposts or taxes were, and always have been, of two different kinds, direct and indirect. You cannot get anything more simple. Mr Gladstone lately told us that direct and

indirect taxation were two lovely sisters to whom he endeavoured to pay equal court. It appears that all our sovereigns, from the days of William I. downwards, I will not say have paid equal court, but have paid court to them also.

With reference to the ordinary revenue of the sovereign, that came in various ways, such as you will easily understand from the enumeration I have given of the different sources of revenue. With reference to the imposts, they were in old times especially "scutage" and "talliage," and those arose in this way: the King had a right to call on all persons occupying knights'-fees to serve in his army for forty days in the year. In course of time this obligation became burdensome, and owners of knights'-fees were willing to pay money to escape the necessity of serving; accordingly there was a compromise, and they paid a certain sum, which was called scutage or escutage. Talliage was paid by certain towns which did not hold knights'-fees, but were also bound to serve the King.

When the system of receiving money instead of service became well established, it was found a very convenient way in which the King could get money. He had nothing to do but call upon the owners of knights'-fees to come and serve in his army, and he was sure to get them to pay him the money instead. In that way he was able, by his own will, to raise very considerable sums of money. That gave rise to many disputes. Ultimately, in the reign of Edward I., the

matter was regulated by an Act of Parliament, entitled, "De tallagio non concedendo," by which it was arranged that scutage or talliage raised by the King should be expended according to the directions of Parliament. Parliament became supreme in that matter.

Another kind of impost was "tenths or fifteenths." We continually see that in early times Parliament granted a subsidy—a later term which I shall explain presently—of, say, two-fifteenths. The word subsidy was the successor of scutage and talliage. The impost of fifteenths was a different matter, and arose in this way: In the reign of Henry II. there was a great deal of religious feeling with reference to the Crusaders. The clergy were very anxious to promote the objects of the Crusaders, and made appeals for pecuniary help. Boxes, like our alms-boxes, were put in the churches, and they called upon the people to devote some donations towards carrying on the Crusades. They even went so far as to declare that all persons who did not contribute a sufficient sum according to their means should be excommunicated. They said, in fact, that 2d. in the pound of every man's goods ought to be put into the boxes. That fund produced a considerable revenue; and the King, who was always on the look-out for any means of obtaining revenue, seized the idea, and instituted a Saladin tithe—a tax of so much in the pound upon every man's personal goods. After a time that became raised to the amount of one-fif-

teenth, and whenever the King chose to exact a contribution, he did so upon the footing of this Saladin tithe.

There were different modes adopted of assessing this tax. Sometimes the King sent commissioners round to investigate and examine into what people's properties were. Sometimes the system was to appoint commissioners in each parish or township to assess the property therein, not only their own goods, but those of their neighbours. And so far was this system carried into effect that it became very inquisitorial indeed. The commissioners used to go into every room in the house, and mark down the different articles they found there, and used to assess their value, and this assessment they gave to the sheriff.

"Here we come back to the Court of Exchequer. To the sheriff was committed the charge of levying the fifteenths, and the levying of all or a greater part of the revenues of the sovereign. The Court of Exchequer was the great court of the kingdom. At the head of it was the Chief Justiciary—the greatest person in the kingdom next to the King himself, and who acted as Regent in the King's absence; there were also the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Treasurer, the Barons, and others. These officers used to hold a meeting or session twice a-year—at Easter and Michaelmas I think it was—and at these sessions they used to call upon the sheriffs and all other accountants to come and bring in their accounts. There was a great roll

of each county kept by the treasurer or in the Court of Exchequer, and in this roll was kept everything which the accountant in the county was charged with, all accounts of knights'-fees, and scutage or talliage, raised on them or on the towns held for the King, all freights and customs duties—of which I will speak presently—all profits on marriages, wardships, and different other feudal advantages, bringing in profit to the King. These were all kept in the roll, and the sheriff and other accountants were called upon to come to the sessions and bring their accounts.

They would bring in, in the first instance, a "profert." They would bring in a certain sum of money and say, "This is our profert, and there is our account. We have received so much according to the account, and we have dispensed or disbursed so much"—for the sheriffs were employed to a very great extent in carrying on the expenditure of the country as well as collecting the income—"and there is the balance." When they had given in their profert, they would receive a tally or acknowledgment of how much they had given in. Then the matter would be examined more closely by the Court of Exchequer; and when all the vouchers had been examined, passed, and allowed, their account would be received and discharged, which was called the "summer."

That was the object of the Court of Exchequer—to examine the accounts received from the sheriffs,

and to give them their discharge: thereupon the matter was closed between them.

I have mentioned a "tally"—perhaps some of you may not know what that was. In those days, when a number of people could not read nor write, it was convenient to have some mode of notation in order to show what sums were paid; therefore they adopted a tally or stick of a certain size, upon which certain marks were cut, denoting different sums of money: the stick was split in two, one half went to the accountant and the other was kept by the Exchequer; and when the officer to whom the half was given had made up his account, he brought in his half, and it was fitted to the other. Here is one of the old tallies (Sir Stafford produced it), though it does not claim much antiquity.

The system was kept up till about thirty years ago. It was not finally put an end to, though it had materially diminished, till the year 1834. The tallies were then ordered to be burnt. They were set fire to, and were the cause of the old Houses of Parliament being burned; but here is one tally not burned on that occasion. You will see that the piece of wood has on each side of it certain notches, which represent so many tens or hundreds of pounds. You may suppose the sheriff of the county of Devon presenting himself before the Court of Exchequer tendering a sum of money, and receiving his tally in discharge and as a receipt for the money paid in.

Then he would show what his receipts had been—so much from the farmer of the customs; so much from wardships, marriages, and other different sources of revenue; and he would show that his expenditure had been so much in payments of the troops, and any other way. Then he would receive the discharge, give up the tally, and be free for that year.

That was the system upon which the public business was conducted; but after a bit there came to be a refinement upon this, and "tallies of pro," or anticipation, were given. If the King desired to raise a sum of money quickly, before the revenue was received he would issue perhaps a certain authority to give tallies of pro, or anticipation, to persons to provide ships, or furnish so many soldiers, or whatever else it might be; and these tallies were brought in instead of money at the time the account was settled. I may mention an instance when the Black Prince received tallies of pro in order to obtain a supply of troops to march into France. I have various other instances which I could give if I had time, but it would open a large field of inquiry. After a while the system of scutage was changed into subsidies, something very much like our income-tax.

The old system was found inconvenient. When several knight's-fees fell into one person's hands, the records of them became lost, and it became very difficult to keep the accounts regularly. Then a different system was adopted, that of subsidy. This

was a charge upon every man's ascertained property —4s. in the pound on land and 2s. 8d. on property, which the fifteenth, 1s. 4d., that fell on goods, made up to 4s., as on land; so that it appears that it was originally intended that the charge upon land and upon goods should be equal. That system continued with more or less change till the time of the civil wars. At that time, when King Charles I. was overthrown, of course all the prerogatives of the Crown, and all its feudal rights—many of which were exceedingly odious — came to an end. The right of purveyance, for instance, was exceedingly odious. The King's purveyors had the right to go and take anything for the service of the King or his family while on a journey. By the right of pre-emption they could go and buy, at their own price, anything the King might need over the heads of other people. In that way very considerable burdens were inflicted on the people. Of course all that was put an end to by the overthrow of the monarchy in the time of Charles I. When Charles II. was restored, although the people returned to obedience to the monarchy, they were not disposed to submit to the old feudal privileges which they had found so oppressive, and of which they had been quit twelve or thirteen years.

It being evident that the old system must be abolished, the King naturally required some compensation, and the compensation given was that of

the hereditary excise, as it afterwards came to be called—a certain amount of excise was given the King in lieu of all the feudal advantages which he formerly had. The excise was a new form of tax comparatively in England, and was one of those many taxes which were introduced from Holland: and this was a tax which had been found very profitable to the Dutch.

Sir Walter Raleigh represented to James I. that the Dutch were flourishing beyond measure because they had no duties on their commerce. They were enabled to bear the expenses of the kingdom, and to do away with all duties of customs, by the adoption of excise duties. It was represented to James I. that this system was one very desirable to introduce into England; but he did not adopt it. When the Parliamentary party were opposing Charles I., they were in want of a considerable sum of money, and not having the resources and the feudal advantages which the King had, they cast about for a mode of raising it. They introduced the excise in 1643. Pym, the first person who did so, introduced it under a promise—like that which Sir Robert Peel made when he put on the income-tax in 1842—that it would be taken off as soon as the war was ended. However, when the war ended in 1649, the general feeling was that the people had been accustomed to the excise, and found it had not been so trying as had been expected. Certain parts were more galling than others, and those

were taken off—the excise on bread, and one or two other necessaries of life; but the excise was continued by resolution of Parliament in 1649, as being "the most easy and indifferent in the manner of levying which man hath devised." It was continued during the whole time of Cromwell.

When King Charles II.'s arrangement with the Parliament was under consideration, and it was necessary to find some substitute for the list of wards and reliefs which he was about to abandon, there was proposed something in the shape of a land-tax on the different counties. While this was being discussed, and when the proportions to be borne by the different counties was very nearly settled, some member got up, as it appeared, by accident, and said, "Why not substitute the excise?" The proposition was taken up, and it was decided in Parliament, by a majority of two, that the excise should be given to the King in the place of his feudal rights. That was why Charles II. made the bankers' claims a charge upon his hereditary excise, rather than upon any other part of his revenue. He considered it his own private property, given in exchange for his own feudal rights as sovereign of England, and not based on the votes of Parliament. He considered, therefore, that he had a right to deal with the excise as he liked, and could charge that part of his revenue with interest due to the bankers.

You see, from what I have said, the importance of

making the facts of settlement after the Restoration a matter of study in this way. The greater part of the King's revenue was thus made subject to the control of Parliament, and was granted by Parliament. I have not told you of the customs; I have not time to enter upon it, but you will understand that it was settled very nearly in the same way. The history of the customs is a curious one, and one on which a great deal of learning may be bestowed. You will understand that, with reference to the customs, with reference to the subsidies, the fifteenths, the post-office, and the other part of the revenue, they may be called taxes which Parliament had the exclusive right of granting. On the other hand, the revenue from the Crown lands, mines, wrecks, and other feudal privileges, still remained to the King independent of Parliament.

One peculiarity with reference to hereditary excise was, that it was granted by the Parliament to the King in exchange for the undoubted feudal rights of the sovereign, and the feudal privileges which were called wards and reliefs. Another thing which appeared on an examination of the financial history of the early sovereigns of England was, that while Parliament had the undoubted right, and always exercised it, of granting the taxes imposed, it did not exercise the same care, and it is not quite clear whether it claimed the right to exercise control over the mode in which the money was expended. There is no doubt that, in many instances, the King asked for sums of

money from Parliament, which were granted, and then took to himself the absolute right of disposing of it as he pleased. There is not a more salient instance —though it refers to a very small amount—than that which occurred so late as the reign of James II.

One Rich—afterwards Lord Holland—was in the King's presence on one occasion when the sum of £3000 was being carried through on its way to the Exchequer. Rich said to the King, "How happy I should be if I only had that money;" upon which the King immediately stopped the money, and gave it to his favourite as a present.

That was the sort of liberal and easy way in which the King dealt with money which reached him either through his hereditary revenue or by gift of Parliament. A still more striking case, perhaps, is that with reference to the subsidy of £300,000, granted by Parliament to King James I. for the particular purpose of carrying on the war with the Elector Palatine of Bohemia, and it was to be paid to commissioners, in order that it might be properly expended. The King explained that, although he would undertake that not one penny should be spent without the knowledge of the commissioners, he claimed the exclusive right of directing how the money should be spent, and they must therefore leave that to him. This right of the King seemed tolerably well established, although in some cases Parliament remonstrated against anything of the sort.

That was the state of things in the early part of the reign of Charles II. I told you that, amongst other questions, we have to ask how the money of the goldsmiths came into the Exchequer; and here we must go back a few steps and consider who the goldsmiths were, and what was the origin of the system of banking in this country.

You know that the value of money has changed very much within the last few centuries, especially since the discovery of the mines in America. Money now is much less valuable than it was; by which we mean that we have a much larger quantity of it. The great change took place in the times of the Tudors and the early Stuarts. In the times of the early Stuarts very large sums of gold and silver began to flow into this country and all over Europe, much larger than had previously been known in commerce. When the merchants found themselves in possession of a large amount of bullion which they did not want to use for some considerable time, it became important that they should find some place in which to bestow it; and in the days of Charles I. the practice commenced of placing bullion in the Mint, which was in the Tower of London, for safe custody.

In 1640, Charles I., being much pressed for money, seized on the amount in the Mint, about £200,000, and applied it to his own purposes. There was a great outcry at this, and in two or three months he contrived to replace all the money; but the fact of its

having been seized, gave a great shock to the confidence of the public, and the merchants no longer deposited their money in the Mint. The goldsmiths at that time had become rather an important body, and as they dealt in precious metals, it was thought desirable that money should be intrusted to their keeping. What gave them such great facilities? At the time of the Civil War, apprentices used to rob their masters and go off to join one or other of the armies, and so leave their masters in the lurch; therefore it became the practice amongst merchants to deposit money with the goldsmiths. I am not sure the apprentices did not begin the practice; they took the money to the goldsmiths and lent it at 4d. per cent a-day or 6 per cent per annum. After a time the merchants took to lending money to them in the same way, and the goldsmiths became depositaries of a very large amount of coin. The question was what to do with it. The King was continually in want of money, and he used to go to the goldsmiths or bankers, when money had been granted to him by Parliament, and call upon them to make him advances. They used to advance money which they received from their customers, to whom they paid 6 per cent, and charged the King 8, and sometimes as much as 30 per cent, according to the King's wants and their own power of dealing with him.

Soon after the Restoration, the King, who wanted money—he was always in want of money—found

that these dealings with the goldsmiths were rather severe; and he was persuaded by one of the tellers of the Exchequer, Sir George Downing, a very able man, that there would be a better way of dealing with the goldsmiths. He said, "The truth is, your Majésty, that the goldsmiths charge this high rate because they are not certain as to the security on which the money is advanced. They know that the Lord Treasurer has a great deal too much power; and when they lend your Majesty money, though they apparently charge an exorbitant rate of interest, they lend it on a security, which, after all, depends very much upon the will and pleasure of the Lord Treasurer of the day." There is no doubt that they did depend very much upon the Lord Treasurer; and he stood in a very peculiar position, because Charles II., as we know very well, had peculiar private expenses of his own which did not altogether bear the light. The real truth is, he was prepared to give, for he was a very good-natured man, to any one who acquired his favour in any way, creditable or discreditable, very large sums—very much more, indeed, than the Treasury would bear.

Lord Clarendon, who rather smooths over matters, tells us that the King really looked to the Chancellor and the Treasurer to refuse to pay any unwise gifts his Majesty might have made. Their pleasant office was, when the King made certain donations, they were called upon, in fact expected, to stop them. You

will allow me to give one or two instances in illustration. Andrew Marvel writes: "They have signed and sealed £10,000 a-year more to the Duchess of Cleveland; who has likewise near £10,000 a-year out of the new form of the county excise of beer and ale; £5000 a-year out of the Post Office; and they say the reversion of all the King's leases, the reversion of all places in the Custom House, the green wax, and indeed what not. All promotions, spiritual and temporal, pass under her cognisance." That is one specimen of the way in which the money went. Here is another from Pepy's Diary: "The King would fain have one of his idle companions to be Lord Treasurer, which would be yet worse; for now some delays are put to the getting gifts of the King; as Lady Byron did not leave him till she had got him to give her an order for £4000 worth of plate to be made for her, but by delays, thanks be to God, she died before she had it." That was the sort of function which the officers of the King had.

Lord Clarendon, who was a grave and discreet man, puts the thing not quite so harshly in this way: "The King was too easy in making assignations upon his revenue, which would make it incapable to satisfy others which were more necessary, . . . and those the Treasurer found himself obliged to stop; and commonly, upon informing the King of it and of his reasons, his Majesty was very well pleased with what he had done, and did often give himself ease from the

importunity of many, by signing the warrants they brought him, in confidence that either the Chancellor or the Treasurer would not suffer them to pass."

In point of fact it raised clamour. Lord Clarendon was not able to stand against it; and it was one of the secret springs of the plot which overthrew him. Curiously enough, Sir George Downing was able to persuade Lord Clarendon's enemies and the people who throve on the King's bounty that in some way it would mend matters if they adopted a proviso he suggested—that in every Act of Parliament granting supplies, there should be a proviso that the money should only be expended for the purposes to which Parliament directed it should be applied, and in that way the power of the Treasurer would be limited.

Now that was a very wise and good suggestion on the part of Sir George Downing, as concerned the interests of the King and the people, because, of course, it was obvious that if money could only be expended as Parliament directed, it could only be expended for national objects. It would limit the power of the King and the power of the Treasurer. Therefore it was distasteful to the Treasurer; and because it was distasteful to the Treasurer, it seems that many of those who had been offended by the Treasurer's strictness, actually took the suggestion up, and encouraged it, much against Lord Clarendon's wishes, though, in fact, it would tell much against their own base interests. However, to make a long story short, the proviso was

carried, and an arrangement was made that the money which was voted by Parliament should be expended according to those votes.

Sir George Downing promised the King, if he would pass this, money would flow into his Exchequer, and it would become one of the greatest banks in Europe. That was not altogether wonderful, because the bankers had comparatively no use for their money, except to lend it out to the King. It is very curious to observe, as a parenthesis, how the bankers were then abused by Sir George Downing, and by all the writers of that time. They said: "What the bankers do is this, they are keeping down the price of land through England, and are discouraging trade; and because they give so high interest for their money, and get so high a rate out of the King's necessities, people find it better worth their while to lend their money to the goldsmiths, and the goldsmiths to lend it to the King, than to invest it in trade or the purchase of land."

If private individuals got 6 per cent by lending to the goldsmiths, and the goldsmiths got from 8 to even 30 per cent by re-lending to the King, people would not invest their money in foreign trade or the purchase of land; and those were the complaints made against the bankers. Then said Sir George Downing, "Let us cut down the bankers' profits, and induce all persons to place their money directly in the Exchequer." According to his proviso, any person bringing money into the Exchequer would receive a tally for the

amount deposited, which would be assignable from one person to another, and the interest regularly paid from the Exchequer, as it came in by grants of Parliament.

That was the way in which, after a time, money was introduced into the Exchequer. Some little pressure was used. Pepys tells us as to the pressure used in order to get the Exchequer full :—

"*June* 14, 1667.—It gives great matter of talk that it is said that there is at this hour in the Exchequer as much money as is ready to break down the floor."

On August 23.—"Sir George Downing tells me how he will make all the Exchequer officers to lend the King money upon the Act; and that the least clerk shall lend money, and he believes the least will be £100, but this I do not believe. He made me almost ashamed that we of the Navy had not in all this time lent any; so that I find it necessary that I should, and so will speedily do it before any of my fellows begin and lead me to a bigger sum."

And further :—

"*August* 24.—This day comes a letter from the Duke of York, to the board, to invite us, which is as much as to fright us, into the lending the King money, which is a poor thing and most dishonourable, and shows in what case we are at the end of the war, to our neighbours. And the King do now declare publicly to give 10 per cent to all lenders, which makes some think that the Dutch themselves would send over money, and lend it upon our public faith, the Act of Parliament."

"*August* 30.—Sir George Downing tells me of Sir William Penn's offering to lend £500, and I tell him of my £300, which he would have me to lend upon the credit of the latter

part of the Act; saying that by that means my 10 per cent will continue to me the longer. But I understand better, and will do it upon the £380,000, which will come to be paid the sooner, there being no delight in lending money now to be paid by the King two years hence."

Pepys was a wise man in his generation, and desirous of standing well with the authorities. He was prepared to lend his money, but he did not care to lend it out even at 10 per cent for too long. But I must hurry on to a conclusion.

Then came the opportunity of a break with Holland, and the attempt was to be made suddenly, and without notice to any one, to seize the Dutch fleet as it was coming from Smyrna. Sir Thomas Clifford came down to the Council, and said the only way to provide money required for the war was to stop the Exchequer. It appears that Sir Thomas Clifford had dropped a hint of this, for Evelyn says so in his Diary, and adds—"but it will soon open again, and everybody will be satisfied." But it was expected the Smyrna fleet would be stopped, and thus a great heap of money be obtained in a very short time. As it happened, they missed the Smyrna fleet, and then it was not possible to pay the money as rapidly as they ought to have done. It appears that the first idea was to stop all proceedings by main force, but that was overruled, and then came the different suits of which I have told you. The number of creditors is said to have been about 10,000 persons.

In 1677, five years after the stopping of the Exchequer, the King granted annuities at 6 per cent, redeemable on payment of the principal, and these were paid till the year before his death. Then they were in arrears till the Revolution, after which came the first suit, the petition to the Barons of the Exchequer for payment. The Attorney-General dismissed it, first, on the ground that the grant was not good, and secondly, that the Barons of the Exchequer were not the proper persons to appeal to. These questions were heard. The Barons of the Exchequer held that the King could alienate the revenues of the Crown, and that a petition was the proper remedy. There was an appeal to the Exchequer Chambers. There the majority of the judges confirmed the finding of the judges below. Treby, Chief-Justice of the Court of Common Pleas, held a different opinion, and Lord Somers, then Lord-Keeper, held with him—that however it might or might not be in the power of the King to charge his hereditary revenue, or that which stood in its place, it was not in the power of the Barons of the Exchequer to order a payment of this sort.

Lord Somers used this argument. He said:—

"If the King's treasure be so far subject to the administration of an ordinary court of justice as that it must be regularly issued upon the application of the subject who has made a demand thereon for an annuity or any other debt, this may turn to the weakening of the public safety to a very high

degree. The Barons of the Exchequer cannot as such be cognisant of the necessities of the State, and if they were, and knew them to be ever so pressing, they must act according to one rule, and must order a pension, granted upon no consideration, or perhaps upon a very ill one, and for a pernicious end, to be paid with the very money which ought to be employed, and possibly was provided by Parliament, for suppressing a rebellion, or repelling an invasion, or setting out a fleet. . . . The truth is, this method does in effect set aside our Lord Treasurer, one of the greatest officers of the kingdom. My Lord Chief-Justice Coke has a fancy that his white staff was given him to drive away importunate suitors. But this would be to little purpose; they have a more certain place to resort to, 'tis but going to the Barons of the Exchequer, and they will command the treasure from him. . . . Nor is it to be said that in the method where the application is to be made to the person of the King the subject is precarious, for it is to suppose what is not to be supposed in law. It is a supposition contrary to the principles upon which the English constitution is framed, which depends upon the honour and justice of the Crown. It must be presumed the Crown will pay its own debts. But to say the King is not to have the ordering the course of payments, when the money is in his own coffers, is to deny him that which is in every subject's power. It is to take from him the judgment of public necessities, or at least the means of relieving them."

This opinion of Lord Somers was in confirmation of the opinion of Lord Chief-Justice Treby, but against the opinion of the majority of the judges. Opinion was then taken whether he was bound by the opinion of the majority, or whether he as Lord Chief-

Justice had the right to decide. The majority held that he was not bound by the opinion of the majority, but must follow his own opinion. He thereupon decided against the claim of the bankers, and against the proceedings in the court below. After that the matter was brought before the House of Lords, and a further appeal was proceeding, when the Act of Parliament I have told you of compromised the matter, stipulating that the bankers should receive half the amount they had lost.

There is no doubt whatever that the bankers suffered considerable hardship, and that their customers suffered still more. The bankers were to some extent compensated by the fact that they received a very high interest for the money they had advanced. As we know, a high modern authority has laid it down "high interest means bad security," therefore it may be supposed that when the bankers charged so high a rate, they were conscious that they were advancing money upon imperfect security. It obviously must have been felt in the days of William III. that those who had lent the money were considerable sufferers; but it was also felt that a great principle was at stake, and that if the Houses of Parliament were ever to exercise control over the money advanced for the service of the kingdom, they must do so at the expense of some suffering on the part of those in whose case the first difficulty was raised. It was felt that, however much the individual bankers and customers might

have suffered, they did thereby establish on a firm footing the fundamental principle of the financial system of the British empire as it now exists—namely, that there shall be no power on the part of the Crown to divert money from the purpose for which Parliament granted it.

There were a great many steps taken in consequence of these proceedings. I told you in the beginning that I hoped to give you some account of the proceedings, but want of time compels me to leave out much that I would have said. I must leave out the introduction of the first ordinary appropriation clause, the resolutions passed by the House of Commons against advancing money on the security of the revenues that had yet to come in. I must leave out a great many propositions introduced at the time of the Revolution, and especially the great Appropriation Act, drawn up by Lord Somers and passed in the first year of William and Mary, which by very minute legislation prevented the misappropriation of public money for purposes other than those for which it was intended; but I must say a few words upon the difference between the present system and the system prevailing in those days.

Then there was an Exchequer in which gold and silver were actually received, and a place in which money was actually deposited. Now the Exchequer is nothing of the sort; but an office of great importance and still greater dignity. Perhaps of its im-

portance I hardly ought to speak, because it is a matter of controversy now whether the Exchequer as a separate office is, or is not, of utility. As this controversy belongs to the region of politics—which are properly excluded from discussion in a society like this—I must keep clear of anything of that sort. But there does still exist an office of Exchequer, which keeps its account at the Bank of England. Now these proceedings connect themselves very much with the foundation of the Bank of England. It was suggested to the King that he ought in some way or other to obtain advances for the public service. It was impossible for the King, receiving grants from Parliament which came in slowly, to meet expenses which had to be incurred suddenly—fitting out fleets, disbanding troops, or other expenses of that sort—unless he had advances of money.

The jealousy occasioned by Charles II. obtaining advances from the goldsmiths, and seizing and misappropriating money, led to the passing of restrictive Acts of Parliament, which rendered it very difficult for the King to obtain advances of that kind. A proposal was at this time made by the promoters of the Bank of England to allow the establishment of that bank, and to make advances to the extent of £1,200,000, without any claim to the Government to repay it at any particular time, at 8 per cent interest. The proposal met with the consent of Parliament, and in that way the first foundation of our national

debt was laid, by the advance by the Bank of England in 1694 of £1,200,000 at 8 per cent. This rate, as we know, has been reduced first to 5, then to 4, then to 3 per cent; but that particular sum still forms part of and is the basis of our national debt. When this claim of the bankers came to be settled, between £600,000 and £700,000 was added to the debt, and by degrees it grew until it advanced to £70,000,000 at the commencement of the Seven Years' War, and to £120,000,000 at the end of that war. It rose to £212,000,000 at the end of the American war, and by the end of the wars with France and Napoleon it had risen to £813,000,000, which was the greatest amount it ever attained.

The origin, therefore, of the debt, was connected to a considerable extent with the jealousy of the Parliament, originated by the transaction we have been specially describing. The Bank of England being thus established, became by degrees the bankers of the Government, and although money could be paid into the Exchequer, yet more and more was paid on the Government account into the Bank of England, and less and less into the Exchequer, until at last the whole receipts of Government came to be and are now paid into the Bank of England.

People seem to care comparatively little as to what becomes of the money paid to Government. We know very well that an Englishman is ready to pay any demand of a tax-collector, and when it is once

paid he does not ask what security there is that money so collected is not misappropriated. This year there have been some rather startling revelations on the part of some of the officers of the Patent Office, showing the possibility of the money received for the public service not reaching its destination; but with reference to the great mass collected, I am happy to say nothing of that sort can happen. I will just say three or four words on the system.

First of all, Parliament is invited by Government to vote such sums as Government may think necessary for the purposes of the nation—for the army, the navy, or the various civil services—and those sums are from time to time granted. But the Government is not empowered thereupon to apply any money which comes to its hands. All the ways and means which are derived from the various sources of revenue—customs, excise, post-office, stamps—all this money is received day after day, and is paid into the Bank of England to the account of the Comptroller of the Exchequer; but nobody can touch the money until Parliament has passed the Appropriation Act, as it is called. After Parliament has voted the various sums required for the public service, a short Act is passed early in the session, empowering Government, out of the Ways and Means as it is called—out of the various sources of revenue paid into the Consolidated Fund—to take so much, not exceeding the amount voted in the early part of the session for

carrying on the service in the early part of the year. When that Act is passed, it becomes a question for Royal authority to interfere.

A Royal order is necessary in order to take any money out of the Exchequer. The Queen gives the order to the Comptroller of the Exchequer, Sir William Dunbar (lately Lord Monteagle), to apply the money placed in his hand in such a manner as the Commissioners of the Treasury may direct. They issue their warrant to the Comptroller of the Exchequer to place certain sums to the account of the Paymaster-General of the Army, and so with the other services as shall from day to day be directed. At the end of the year the accounts are made up, and submitted to the Commissioners of Audit, who are independent of the Treasury, and everybody else, and directly responsible to Parliament. They examine the accounts, and see that they are properly kept, after which they are laid before Parliament. There is, therefore, now a complete check established upon the Exchequer of all money once voted by Parliament on behalf of Government. All distinction of hereditary items of revenue and other different charges have been abolished one after the other, and enormous strides have been made, especially through the exertions of a statesman whom we lost not many years since, who ought to be particularly honoured in connection with great financial reform, Sir James Graham, by far the ablest and greatest financial administrator

within the last half-century. Great improvements have been made in that direction, although there is still something to be done to prevent such petty peculations as those which have recently come to our knowledge, and to simplify some matters, which I must allow are still somewhat of a mystery in the proceedings of the Exchequer.

There has now been established a really substantial control on the part of the representatives of the people, both over the money they will grant, and over the way in which that money is expended. When we look back to the times of Charles II., and see what great battles were then fought, and how very much our liberties and our control over the finances, which is one of the corner-stones of our liberties, were then in jeopardy; when we see those devices or plans for supplying the King with money by arbitrary proceedings—seizing money advanced to the Exchequer—and that it was also in contemplation to devise a method of rendering the King independent of Parliament; and when we see in what manner those devices and plans were checked and defeated, we cannot but feel grateful to those who fought those battles for us. There are no doubt some parts of their transactions we cannot but regard with some regret, especially the fact that innocent persons should have been to a considerable extent pecuniary losers; yet, upon the whole, we must look with satisfaction upon those transactions.

I think what I have spoken to you about affords sufficient justification to myself for having selected the subject as one which might afford occupation and amusement for an evening; and if what I have said prompts you to look yet more closely into the subject for yourselves and to follow it up, I can promise you that, should it open to you anything like the amount of information and interest which the preparation of this lecture has opened to me, you will be abundantly rewarded for all the trouble you may bestow.

IX.

NAMES AND NICKNAMES.

A LECTURE DELIVERED AT CREDITON,

NOVEMBER 1865.

THE study of words and the play upon words had always been a favourite pursuit with Sir Stafford H. Northcote. He delighted in the old-fashioned quaintness of some of the Devonshire expressions, and often found amusement in word-puzzles, or illustrating by charades those capable of two or more interpretations. One suggestion we find in a letter from Sir Stafford, on October 5, 1865, addressed to Lady Northcote, which may indicate a little how the subject arose in his mind: "I was rather amused by Arnold's showing me a list I made, when reading for my degree, of all the hard words in the Odyssey, and which I had bequeathed to him when I left Oxford. He carries it into school as a sort of lexicon!"

I HOPE, as my kind friend Mr Cleave has said, it is unnecessary for one of my family to be introduced to the town of Crediton, for from very early times indeed the Northcotes were connected with this place. Till within the memory of living persons, at

all events, the name was perpetuated here on property formerly belonging to our family, though it does not now belong to us. Whether that be so or not, I feel sure you will kindly accept my cordial expressions of pleasure at being now enabled to meet you, and my satisfaction at finding that your institution, which I had the pleasure of visiting several years ago, when it was in its infancy, is flourishing, and is, I believe, doing very great good in this town. I accepted very readily the invitation Mr Cleave sent to me to give a lecture, and was rash enough to choose for the subject of that lecture the very wide subject of "Names and Nicknames." The printer evidently measured my powers more accurately than I did myself, and perceiving that I had undertaken a larger field than it was possible for any one in a single evening to cover, very considerately relieved me of half of my task. I thank him, but at the same time must remind him that there are cases in which the half, according to an old Greek proverb, is more than the whole. It is a greater labour to exhaust a small portion of a subject than to run cursorily and superficially over a whole subject. Although nicknames alone may certainly occupy an evening or several evenings, yet to prepare a lecture or course of lectures on nicknames, would involve a greater amount of study, and much more pains and trouble, than to give a mere review of the larger subject of names as well as nicknames. I hope that I have put a right and charitable construction on

the printer's error. I confess there was another construction, not quite so charitable, which occurred to me at the first moment—viz., that the printer might perhaps have treated names with some little contempt, finding that persons frequently speak with some contempt of mere names, fortifying themselves with an authority which, if they quoted it accurately, would be a very high authority. They say they have the authority of Shakespeare for saying—

> "What's in a name? that which we call a rose,
> By any other name would smell as sweet."

Allow me to begin what I have to say by taking that as my text.

If that were the opinion of Shakespeare, deliberately put forth in his own name and person, I should feel bound to treat it with great respect, because anything put forth by him must necessarily command the respect of all Englishmen. Shakespeare, however, says nothing of the sort. He puts the sentence in the mouth of one of the characters in his plays—into the mouth of an impassioned young lady, Juliet—who is arguing, as impassioned young ladies in a state of great excitement may be led to argue, not very logically. Juliet is in this position: finding she has for a lover one who is everything that is charming, but who unfortunately owns the name of Romeo, and by the name of Romeo is known to belong to the family of Montague, to which her own family are hereditary

enemies, she is trying to persuade herself that there is no real objection to their union. She says:—

> "'Tis but thy name that is my enemy:
> Thou art thyself, though not a Montague.
> What's Montague? it is nor hand, nor foot,
> Nor arm, nor face, nor any other part
> Belonging to a man. O, be some other name!
> What's in a name? that which we call a rose,
> By any other name would smell as sweet;
> So Romeo would, were he not Romeo called,
> Retain that dear perfection which he owes,
> Without that title."

She tries to persuade herself that the name is really insignificant, may easily be set aside, and that therefore she may legitimately give way to her passion, just as in a later part of the play she says it is not the lark she hears singing—not the lark that comes as "the herald of the morn" to separate them, but the nightingale. What is the argument we may draw even from Juliet's own speech? It is this: it would not signify whether Romeo was called Tybalt, Mercutio, Benvolio, or any other name, if it was a name that would identify and would show that he belonged to the family of her enemies. There is a high importance in that which she affected to treat lightly, for it identifies the person, and it raises all the associations which are connected with that person, and so suggests difficulties which otherwise would not have been suggested.

The use and importance of names may be regarded in a twofold aspect. They are of use for the purpose

of identifying, and of use for the purpose of describing. It is quite true that one name for the purpose of identifying is almost as good as another, if we only agree to use the same name, and if we take care not to apply it to too many objects indiscriminately. It would be a matter of indifference for the purpose of identifying this town whether you called it Crediton or Exeter, if everybody agreed to call Crediton Exeter and Exeter Crediton. But if you look to names as descriptive, as well as for the purpose of identification, there would be material difference. Crediton is, as we know, the town to be found on the Creedy; Exeter is the camp—*cestre* or *castrum*, on the river Exe. You would really destroy all the meaning in connection with history in names if you were to exchange them promiscuously the one for the other. Exeter carries you back to the time when the Romans made it one of the Roman stations; Crediton reminds us, on the other hand, that it is a town of Saxon origin. Whether, as it is said,

> "Crediton was a market town
> When Exeter was a furzy down,"

I do not know; but I do know that the name of the one dates back to the Roman, whereas the name of the other dates back to Anglo-Saxon times. If you were to treat the names merely for the purpose of identifying the places, it would be indifferent which you used; but if you wished to import the element

of description, you must take care not to part with the name which contains within itself something descriptive. If you wish to appreciate the importance of names, consider what the word name itself means. Name is in Latin *nomen*, in French *nom*—that by which a thing is known. The Latin *nomen* is derived from *noscere*, to know, and *nomen* is that by which a thing is known. We know a thing and identify it if we use the same term which all other people who speak of the same thing also use. We know it still more if we use a term which not only identifies but to some extent describes it. *Nomen* is in Latin used for name and noun, and so is *nom* in French. In fact, all names are nouns, and all nouns are names. Some grammarians say that there are only two real parts of speech,—the noun or name, and the verb, or the word or thing said—that is, said about it. The noun represents the permanent idea; the verb represents the transitory idea, the action which takes place with reference to the permanent idea, which is represented in the noun. All other parts of speech, they tell us, are only short signs or abbreviations of sentences which might be developed, not so conveniently, into nouns and verbs. So we might treat names or nouns as comprising or representing ideas. As nouns represent ideas, they represent real things; they are necessarily of great importance to us, as the ideas we form of things are important.

I wish to speak of names or nouns under the two

characters which I have given to them—in so far as they identify, and in so far as they describe. In so far as they identify, the great object is to give the same name as other people, and not to give the same name to a number of different things. If you once know the name of a thing, you fancy, and not only fancy but believe rightly, that you know a good deal about it. You see a certain tree, and ask what is the name of that tree. You are told it is called an oak. Being told that name does not convey any particular idea to you, yet you seem to know more of the tree than you did before you knew its name. It is perfectly true that you do know more; you have obtained the means of communicating with all other persons who know anything about that tree; you have obtained a *datum* in your own mind to which you may assign anything you find out about the tree. When reading a book of travels, natural history, poetry, or of any other kind, anything you may see mentioned with regard to the oak at once connects itself with the tree to which you have assigned that name. Therefore by gaining a name, merely for the purpose of identifying, you do obtain a real knowledge to some extent of the thing you are studying, and the means of obtaining much greater knowledge. But, as I have said already, for that purpose it is necessary you should not assign the same names to different things. It is too much the habit in England, and all over the world, to give the same names

to a large number of different things, persons, or places. Take, for instance, places—take the name of the town through which I passed just now—Newton St Cyres. Newton is a name which is common, I think, to forty-two different places in England. Stoke is a still commoner name—there are sixty-two Stokes in England. When one hears of forty-two Newtons and sixty-two Stokes, one is apt to recall the lines of Byron about Thompsons and Smiths :—

> "With him there came several Englishmen of pith,
> Sixteen were called Thompson and nineteen Smith."

We have thus a large number of names which fail to distinguish because applied to many persons or places. It is necessary that some other element should be imported, in order to identify and describe that which with a single name is not identified. We have therefore, in the cases of the two names I have mentioned, other names added, in order to distinguish the Newtons and Stokes the one from the other. We have Newton St Cyres, Newton Poppleford, Newton Abbot, and Stoke Damarel, Stoke Canon, &c. This has been the process by which names of places have grown up; and the names of persons have grown in the same way. Originally, in early times, as far as we read, there was only one name given to each person. Adam, Abel, Abraham, had but one name. But in course of time, as nations increased, and as it became impossible to find different names for every

individual of the human race, the same name came to be repeated, and then distinctive surnames began to be added, just as I have suggested to you in the case of the towns I have quoted.

I need not take up your time—though the subject is one that would occupy a lecture in itself—in tracing the different modes by which patronymics or family names were given by different nations. In one case the grandson was always called after the grandfather; in another case the father was called after the name of his own son, as the father of so-and-so. Various other kinds of patronymics might be mentioned. I will mention one, as being the most elaborate with which we are acquainted, and because it is a system which resembles to a very great extent the system which prevails with us in England. A Roman had necessarily two names; the *prænomen*, or personal name, which applied to the individual—and the *nomen*, or name, of his *gens* or family. There were a certain number of *gentes*, or families, in Rome, and every person was called after the name of the family of which he was a member. Let us take the *gens* Cornelii. Everybody belonging to that family was called Cornelius, besides his *prænomen* of Publius, or Caius, or Lucius, or something else. After a time, as these families multiplied, there was a great number of persons bearing the same family name, and it became necessary and convenient to distinguish the branches of the different families. What we may call

nicknames were then hit upon. Nicknames are of still earlier date; but here, for the first time in the observations I am making to you, we come upon the use of nicknames. There were introduced into the Roman families, besides the name of the individual and family to which a man belonged, a third name, of the nature of a nickname. This was called the *cognomen.* For instance, Publius Cornelius, because he was in the habit of walking with a staff, is called Scipio; and he was thus distinguished from the others by being called Publius Cornelius Scipio. All his descendants were called Cornelius Scipio. After a time we come to one who distinguished himself by special actions, by his victories in Africa, and by his defeat of Hannibal; and on account of his great success in Africa he gains another honourable name over and above those obtained by his ancestors, and takes the name of Africanus, so that he is known as Publius Cornelius Scipio Africanus. Thus was added another name in the same family. This was the *agnomen.* Sometimes it would happen that one of those families was about to become extinct from there being no son in the family. In order to keep up the name, it became a practice to adopt some one from another family, and then import the name of the *gens,* or family, from which the adopted person came, and add it to the names of the family into which he was adopted. When the Scipios were likely to become extinct, one of the Æmilianii was adopted, and became

Publius Cornelius Scipio Æmilianus. He also distinguished himself in Africa, and he also became Africanus; but to distinguish him from the former Africanus, this second one, who subdued and took Carthage, was called Africanus Minor. By degrees name accumulated upon name, and a large number of names was owned by one and the same person.

You will observe from what I have said that it is perfectly intelligible how the difficulties with regard to names have arisen. This practice of going on with family names led to the difficulty of giving the same name to too many people. The same practice prevails in this and many other countries: from the desire to perpetuate names, we obtain more names of one kind than is convenient. A notable example may be cited in the case of the Popes. The Popes do not use their own names, but use assumed names. Every man who comes to be elected Pope takes a name which belonged to one of his predecessors in the Papal chair. In the first instance, among the Popes who were elected Bishops of Rome, there were some persons who bore heathen names. It did not appear suitable that Christian bishops should be known by heathen names, and in order to get rid of this objection names were taken that were not liable to it. In the early days of the Popes two or three Popes kept their own names, and they died quickly one after the other. It was consequently held unfortunate to retain one's own name, and desirable that every Pope should take a new

name. Ultimately the practice came to be that every newly elected Pope should assume the name of the Pope under whose rule he obtained the cardinal's hat. By this plan the names of the Popes have become very restricted, and there is but a small collection of names from which the Popes may be entitled. I will not go into other cases illustrative of the confusion which results from the use of the same names by many people; but I call your attention to these instances in order to observe that nicknames appear to be the natural and proper remedy for this state of things.

But besides the use of names as identifying, there is another use of names as describing the objects which are to be identified: and here it is that the great importance of names arises; because, if you may by the use of names describe things, you may, by applying particular names, use an argument with reference to the things you describe. Consequently the imposition of a name is a very important matter. Persons very often say, "The name tells its own story." Yes, so it does; but then it is of importance that it should tell the true and right story. A name is a very strong argument very often: for instance, take an illustration with which we are familiar in the Bible, if we rightly understand the passage in which it occurs. We are told that King Hezekiah, when he found the brazen serpent was worshipped by the Israelites, took it down and destroyed it, and called it Nehush-

tan—that is to say, he told them that the worship of such a thing was monstrous, by calling it a mere thing of brass. The application of the name Nehushtan was in itself an argument that took from it anything which might be supposed to possess divinity, or the right to regard it with superstitious reverence, and reduced it to its proper level—a mere thing of brass. So by the imposition of a proper name—a name with a meaning in itself—a very powerful argument may be used to promote an object in any case. This practice may and does take place continually, in disputes which arise amongst ourselves on a great number of questions, religious, political, and other questions. For instance, it is said that in the days when the Puritans were stirring up the people against Charles the First, they applied to themselves the title of "the godly," and to their opponents the title of "the malignant"—and if once the title was admitted, one can see that the whole argument was admitted. If a man was asked, "Are you on the side of the godly or on the side of the malignant?" what could the man say but that he was on the side of the godly? Therefore the use of a name may in itself be a strong argument; and so much the more from the fact that people often have not time to study the merits of a question themselves, but take it as it is represented to them by others. So it becomes of very great importance that the names given to persons, parties, or things should be given fairly, because otherwise the application of

a name, if unfair, is in itself a strong argument, and raises in itself a strong and subtile prejudice against the person or thing to which it is applied.

Take another illustration from history of some of the religious movements in Ireland. I believe persons who are employed very diligently in the propagation of the Protestant religion in Ireland, and have obtained a certain number of converts among Roman Catholics, have met with very great opposition on the part of Roman Catholics. The opposition takes this form,—that Roman Catholic priests and others call those people who have been converted to the Protestant religion "soupers." The object is to show that those who become converts do so for the sake of getting soup. And if you once get this impression, the question, "Are you a souper?" means "Are you a person who will change your religion for a mere worldly advantage?" and great advantage is gained by the application of the name. If the name is used fairly, it is a very powerful and legitimate argument; but if, on the other hand, it is used unfairly, it is a very objectionable and a very dangerous mode of using language. Now, I point out these things because I wish to impress upon you that it is very important that we should be careful in giving names, because giving names is a great power we all have. The great power which distinguished man from the beast is the power of speech; the great use of speech is to express ideas; and the mode of expressing per-

manent ideas is, as I said just now, giving names. The first task which Adam was given by the Creator was to give names to all things—not mere arbitrary names, but names which should describe the things named; and throughout the history of mankind, men are doing the same thing as Adam—giving names to all things. It is upon our consciences to give right and true names—not false names and names arising out of prejudice, but true names, actually describing the condition and the essence of the things of which we are speaking. I say, therefore, that a name is an argument, and as an argument, may be used or abused.

I will give you a few illustrations of the interest which attaches to names which are rightly used. As there are continually new things coming to our knowledge, and new ideas rising in our minds, so from time to time there are continually new names springing up, and great skill and care are required in the affixing of proper names to things. The fame of poets arises from the power they possess of creating names, as it were—that is to say, giving proper names to ideas and things—for poetry resolves itself into this, giving most appropriate names and expressions to ideas and things. If you look at names with that idea, and if you try to find out what lessons are to be extracted from them, you will find them full of interesting truths and most interesting meanings. I do not know whether many of you are

acquainted—but if not it is very desirable that you should, as many as possible, make yourselves acquainted—with the works of the present Archbishop of Dublin, formerly Dean Trench, upon the science and study of language. These works you will find full of interest, and extremely suggestive. Amongst other things to which he draws attention in his lectures upon the study of language and the use of words, is the great historical interest in words—to the quantity of history contained in the names in use amongst us. If you take any names and examine what the history of those names is, you find there is indeed a very great amount of interest attaching to them. Take, for instance, the question from what source names have sprung. We know in England that our language is composite. England has been colonised, so to say, or conquered, by several different races of mankind. The Britons have been here, the Romans, the Saxons, the Danes, and the Normans; and every one of them has left impressions upon the language and the names of the country. If you take any name, analyse it, and look into its history, you will find interesting traces of the source from whence it comes; and very often, if you look closely into it, you will find a great many curious and interesting particulars arising out of it. Miss Yonge, in her work on 'Christian Names,' will supply you with many instances. I will take one or two names, just to illustrate what I mean. Take, for instance, a name

now very common in England—Arthur. There is a great deal of history in the name of Arthur. Arthur at once carries us back to the lives we have read of in Tennyson's poems; it carries us back to King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table. The first impression we have is that Arthur is an old British name, which has no doubt been continued in English history from the first beginning of our history, for we find in English history several Arthurs, who we may fancy were called after King Arthur, with his Knights of the Round Table. I will mention one or two facts, however, to show that this was not exactly the case. In the first place, if we look to the records in Domesday Book, and to other authorities, we find that although Arthur occurs in early English times, it is not a very common name. It is a sign that it was not a very common name that hardly any surnames are formed from it. The really common English names have large numbers of surnames formed from them. Thomas gives us Thomas and Thompson; William gives us Williams, Williamson, and Wilson; Richard, Richards and Richardson; Robert, Roberts and Robertson; Hodge, Hodges and Hodgson,—and so on. But we do not find that the case with Arthur. I will now remind you of a few who bore that name —now so common—in the history of England, and why they were so called, because there is something of history in the matter.

You all know that the nephew of King John, sup-

posed to have been murdered by his uncle, was called Prince Arthur. You remember that the eldest son of Henry the Seventh was also called Prince Arthur. Is there any reason why these two in particular should be called Arthur? There are certain reasons. King Arthur was a British hero. The story is that he fought against the Saxons, and resisted the overthrow of the British power in this island. The name connects itself, not with the Saxon population, but with the British population. Now the British are to be found not only in those districts of England into which they were driven, Wales, and the county of Cornwall, but we also find them in Bretagne or Brittany in France. Those people are a cognate family, for there many of the old Britons took refuge. It is from Brittany that the legends of King Arthur are to a great extent derived. Call to mind these facts in considering the names of the two princes to whom I have referred. Prince Arthur, the nephew of King John, was the son of Constance of Brittany, the wife of Geoffrey Plantagenet. The name was given to him by his mother Constance, because perhaps she had the idea that Arthur would come back to England with all the greater advantage if he bore the name popularly associated in some districts of England with the ancient glories of the British nation, for the popular idea was that King Arthur was not dead, but some time or other would come back again. Take again Arthur Tudor, son of Henry VII., and we get the same idea

much more clearly manifested. Arthur was a Breton name, and is still kept up in Brittany. I could tell you of other Arthurs who have figured in history besides these. There is a tradition that an old prophecy of Merlin foretold both that Arthur was alive and should rule in England, and again, that Richmond should come from Brittany and be monarch of England. In the days of Henry V., after the battle of Agincourt, Arthur de Richemont, Count of Brittany, was taken prisoner; and when Henry V. was asked to accept a ransom and set him free, he refused, because he was afraid that the prophecy of Merlin, that Richmond should come from Bretagne and be monarch of England, might be fulfilled. And he was the more afraid, because he bore the name of Arthur, concerning whom there was the other prediction. When we come to the time of Henry VII., we see that he was the Earl of Richmond, that he did come from Brittany, and became monarch of England. When he became king he called his son Arthur, because he wished to revive the memory of the old British King Arthur, and thus show that both prophecies of Merlin were accomplished; and Henry VII. also set forth that, being a Welshman, his lineage was carried back to the old British race; and he endeavoured to show that Norman, Saxon, and British lines were all united in the persons of himself and his successor.

Still, in spite of the introduction of the name in this way, Arthur did not become a very popular name

in England till comparatively recently—till really and truly the great exploits of that renowned soldier, Arthur Wellesley, Duke of Wellington, made it a popular name. Names like this may be followed through all history, and we see how many curious things they introduce to you. The history of the British race, the old superstitious prophecies and legends—our internal history, so to speak—are introduced in a single name.

There is another common name which may be mentioned to you—that of Charles. Though very common in England now, it is not an old name in the country, and there are some curious historical facts connected with it. The name of Charles was commonly introduced mainly through the attachment of the Royalists to the unfortunate King Charles the First—Charles Stuart. How did Charles Stuart get his name? Charles Stuart was the son of James I., one of the series of Jameses who reigned in Scotland, and with very great ill fortune. King James was a learned man and astute, and he determined on trying to break the ill luck that attached to the name of James by introducing the name of Charles into his family. He called his eldest son Henry, no doubt because he wished to show that it was through his descent from Henry VII. that he claimed the kingdom of England. He called his second son Charles, because at the time he was born Charles the Fifth was Emperor of Germany, and the most powerful and illustrious monarch of the age

before James. King James believed that the name of Charles was a prosperous one to introduce into his family; but it did not prove so, as we know. Still it is curious as an illustration of the mode in which names are introduced. The subject opens an infinity of questions. George was not a name very common in England until the time of the monarchs of that name. Now, in reference to George, I would just say that female names formed from male names are formed in a manner very different from the feminine of George, Georgiana. It would strike us that Georgia was more correct. Well, but it was Georgia at first, and afterwards became Georgiana. George, Prince of Denmark, was the husband of Queen Anne. Their goddaughter was christened after both of them—Georgia in compliment to the Prince, and Anna after the Queen. Thrown together, we have Georgianna or Georgiana. Some names have been given after the works of popular authors — for instance, we are told that the name of Esther or Hester, which is now a common name in England, was revived in France by the performance of Racine's play of "Esther." Everybody there then called daughters Esther, and in England Hester or Esther. Names have also been introduced by the marriage of a foreign queen with the English sovereign; and in the old Roman Catholic times sometimes by the translation of the relics of saints. There is a curious instance of that kind. It is worth mentioning,

because it gives us another kind of illustration of the way in which history is mixed up with these names. Take the name of "Mark": it has a curious history. A mark we know is the English name of a piece of money of the value of 6s. 8d. That is derived from the impression of St Mark upon the Venetian coinage. We derived a great deal of our monetary ideas and wisdom from the Italians, and particularly from the Venetians. How came St Mark's image to be so impressed on this Venetian coin? It arose in this way: the evangelist St Mark was buried at Alexandria; but in the middle ages his relics were carried from Alexandria to Venice. The name of St Mark became "all the rage," as we now say, at Venice—everything was called after St Mark. He was taken as the patron saint of the city, and his image was impressed on the Venetian coin. We, in borrowing the coinage, borrowed the name of Mark.

I will give you another instance, and one of a different kind, rather to show the mode in which names may be made to convey false views of history. There is a remarkable instance of this in the use of the term Czar as applied to the Emperor of Russia. The original title was Tzar, not Czar; and the ruler whom we now call the Czar was always known in old writings as the Tzar of Muscovy. I believe the word is of Muscovite origin. You remember that the first Emperor of Rome was Julius Cæsar. Cæsar was a name something like a nickname added to his own family

name, which had become hereditary in his branch of the family, and afterwards was a name taken by all the Roman emperors. From the Roman emperors it passed to the Emperors of Germany. They assumed the title of Cæsar, and are called Kaiser. You remember, too, that the Roman empire became divided into two—east and west. The capital of the western empire was Rome, and that of the eastern Constantinople. When Russia advanced in power, it became ambitious, and aimed at the possession of Constantinople and the empire of the East. It occurred to the Tzars that they would gain a point by putting out that they were the legitimate successors to the Roman emperors; therefore they changed their name of Tzar into Czar, spelling it with a C instead of a T, as though it were a corruption or shortening of Cæsar. They put out that they were the true emperors of the East, and claimed Constantinople in consequence. At the same time they began to use a name which is not so common a Christian name in other countries as in Russia —that of Constantine. The conversion of the name Tzar into Czar, and the use of the name Constantine, was a mode in which they sought to convey a suggestion, and to attach a historical interest to the family of the Czar.

Again, I could give you very curious illustrations of the mode in which names perpetuate historical and geographical errors. For instance, we talk of the West Indies, but it is not very proper to call Jamaica,

St Domingo, and the other islands India at all. The history in the name of the mistake is this: Columbus and those who undertook the voyage round the world with him expected to arrive in passing round the world at India; and when they reached the land, which was afterwards discovered to belong to America, they believed they had reached a portion of the Indies, and so they gave the name of West Indies to those islands which we now know have nothing whatever to do with India. Still the name of India or the Indies has been preserved. Curiously enough the error is followed in a good many minor matters. The French call the turkey *d'Indon* and *d'Inde*, and originally it was "*poulet d'aurbe*"; but the turkey did not come from the east at all, but from the west. Afterwards they called it "*poulet d'Inde*," which has been changed to *dinde* and *dindon*. We do nearly the same thing; we give the fowl the false name of turkey, though that is quite unmeaning and improper, inasmuch as it comes not from the east, but from the west. I might go on with a great number of other illustrations of this kind, but I should find it impossible to get through what I wish to say on other points. Therefore I will turn from what I may call the primary use of names, as identifying and describing, to the secondary use of names.

Names not only describe what things and people are, but they have a tendency to make things and people what they are called. Thus, to give a man a

good name, supplies an incentive to him to become good; and to give him a bad name, to some extent, is to supply an incentive to make him evil. We may apply here an old proverb which the French have, "*Noblesse oblige.*" When a man has a noble name, he is marked, and under the obligation to do nothing ignoble or mean; and no doubt the giving persons honourable names is a pledge, and tends to spur them on to honourable deeds. So, on the other hand, the giving of base names has a tendency to lower people in their own eyes, and induce them to be less careful about what they do. In that view, names may be considered as having great moral or ethical value; and we should be very careful indeed as to the way in which we apply names, because we may be doing a very serious injury to the moral character of our neighbours, and to our own moral character by giving false, untrue, ill-applied, and inappropriate names to things which ought to be well named. If you give light and indulgent names to vices, if you gloss over and smooth over vices, you render them less odious to the mind; and, on the other hand, if you give contemptuous names to that which is excellent and noble, you are apt to take away the appreciation which people have of that which is noble. Nothing is more painful than to see the way which some people have of smoothing and glossing over what are serious evils by giving them light names. It is what is described in the Bible as one of the greatest, one of the worst

forms of error,—to call bitter sweet and sweet bitter —to call good evil and evil good. Take an instance as an illustration: the French have a title which they give to persons who are thieves, or who gain their livings by dishonest actions,—they call them *chevaliers d'industrie.* They give people who are industrious in a thieving way this sort of cant name. They smooth over that which is ugly—whereas that which is ugly ought to have an ugly name. People ought to be prepared to speak out. If there are things which we ought to be ashamed to name, let us not name them at all; but do not let us give those things a mere gloss or colour. If we are to speak out at all, let us give things their proper names. So, in the same way, if we are speaking of that which is virtuous and noble, let us use words that properly apply to what is noble and virtuous; let us not degrade or debase them by giving them secondary meanings, and meanings which cause a smile at virtue, as if it was something contemptible.

Take an instance or two of the way in which this is done; and these illustrations I take from Dean Trench's works. The words "innocent," "simple," and "silly," are often used in a degraded sense. These words in their first origin had a noble meaning. "Innocent" meant purity—one who was not guilty of any harm; but it gradually slid down until the name innocent is applied to one who is below the ordinary level of intelligence. You call a man an "innocent"

who is in fact a fool, and thereby you degrade the word "innocent." In the same way the words "simple" and "simplicity" are used as "foolish" and "folly," as though a man could not be simple without being a fool, just as some talk of a man who is a rogue as a sharper, as though he showed himself particularly sharp in taking to roguery, and ought to be rather encouraged and incited in such conduct. The word "silly" implied originally one without guile, and was the same as the German *selig*, which means blessed, applied to persons who are innocent and holy in their lives; but this has been degraded into the word silly, as if the persons to whom it is applied were something below the ordinary level of humanity. On the other hand, we see words used in a way to import a certain majesty and greatness into things which really have no true majesty or greatness about them. Here it is, I venture to say, that the nicknames come in usefully. Nicknames very often come in to supply a defect in the system of names. Where names fail in correctness or power, and where naming has been abused, where wrong and false names are given to persons or things, there nicknames very often come in and apply the sharp test of ridicule and truth, and expose the bombast which has grown up with reference to names.

Now I must just say a few words on the subject of nicknames. They are called in to supply defects in names—defects in identification, and defects in description. I said a little while ago that in consequence

of giving the same name to a great number of different individuals, it became necessary to use nicknames, in order to distinguish one from another. We cannot be particular now in saying what is and what is not a nickname. It is a question whether some surnames —whether such names as the Roman cognomens to which I have referred—are not nicknames. I would rather say what properly is meant by nickname. It is something which contains in itself the element of ridicule or humour, and therefore it is capable, like names, of use or abuse. I might, if I were to go scientifically to work, like the old philosophers, divide nicknames into many different classes. Let me only divide the very important ones. I may say that some nicknames are what philosophers call objective, and some subjective—that is to say, some arise from the nature of the things to which they are applied, and some arise from the idiosyncrasies of our own minds and the views we take of those things. When we say, for instance, that Edward I. was called Edward Longshanks, that is an objective surname. I will illustrate rather than attempt to define what I mean by a subjective surname. I mean all nicknames which represent not only what a thing is, but how we see it. It will take our colour, just as we see things to be green through green spectacles, not because the things are really green, but because we see them through a green medium. Just in the same way we find from some nicknames not what a person was, but, what is

very interesting, what sort of idea the people who gave him the name had of him. Take an imaginary character, which will do as well as another. Don Quixote gave his lady-love, Aldonza Lorenzo, a nickname. Don Quixote looked at everything through spectacles tinted with the colours of chivalry, and he could see nothing commonplace. Every inn was to him a castle, every windmill a giant; so when he looked at his lady, Aldonza Lorenzo, he transformed her into Dulcinea del Toboso—a higher and more poetical form of the same name. When we look at Dulcinea, as the name which Don Quixote gave Aldonza, it implies not what she was—for she was a coarse, vulgar, and common damsel enough—but it shows the character in which Don Quixote regarded her. Dulcinea was a subjective name, because she appeared so to no one else but him.

We find in some cases persons give names rather to conceal their own feelings. They feel so deeply and keenly about a particular thing, or towards a particular person, that they do not like to use the common name, but conceal their feelings by applying some little nickname. As the French poet sang—

"Le nom de celle que j'aime,
Je le garde dans mon cœur"—

the name of his beloved he could not mention; he could not bear that it should be pronounced by the vulgar. In the same way people conceal their reverence under nicknames of an affectionate character. Or

again, nicknames will take this form of truth: people will call a man a name which expresses what they see of him. They do not see all of a great man—all of a hero. As Carlyle tells us, "It requires a hero to see a hero." A valet cannot see all that is in a hero; and thence comes the old proverb—"No man is a hero to his *valet de chambre*." So you now and then find a great effort on the part of the people at large actually seeking, as it were, to bring a hero down to the level of themselves—just as they called the Duke of Wellington "Old Nosey"; they could see his large nose, but they could not see all that was in the man. So Admiral Vernon was called "Old Grogram," because he wore a rough grogram coat. I may remind you in passing that the word "grog," so commonly in use amongst sailors, was derived from "Old Grogram." Admiral Vernon was the darling of the sailors. He was one of the finest admirals we ever had before Nelson's time—perhaps not excepting Nelson himself. Admiral Vernon was a troublesome man in Parliament—sailors often are—and when Parliament was discussing the war in the West Indies, he found fault with the conduct of the war—that it was not carried on quickly enough, and with the men employed. He said the Admiral and his officers were not worth much, and added: "If you will give me six ships, I will take Porto Bello in a month." The Government looked upon the Admiral as a great nuisance, and they let him have the six ships to go and take Porto Bello—

and he did take it. That made him the darling of the sailors. He was the first who taught sailors to mix water with their rum, which makes it much more palatable than before, and that was the way in which "Old Grogram" gave the name of "grog" to liquor.

"A mighty bowl on deck he threw
And filled it to the brink;
Such drank the Burford's gallant crew,
And such the gods shall drink.

The sacred robe which Vernon wore
Was drenched within the same,
And hence his virtues guard our shore,
And *Grog* derives its name."

What I want to say with reference to these subjective names in particular is, that they are interesting, because they show what was in the minds of the people that gave them. Now some people look at things with eyes and others with no eyes—as the saying is, some look at things prosaically and others poetically. Wordsworth tells us that Peter Bell saw nothing beautiful in lovely things. "A primrose on the river's brim" might suggest a thousand things to other persons; but to him it was but "a yellow primrose" and nothing else. This is the way persons regard things prosaically, with an unpoetic mind. From the familiar names which the peasantry of a county give to familiar objects, we see what the character of the peasantry is—whether they are poetical or not. I venture to say that the English are an eminently poetical people.

In former times, at all events, they were so; for many of the names which they gave to common objects—birds, beasts, insects, flowers—are eminently poetical. Take some of them which are derived from religious fancies. The ladybird—*bête à bon Dieu*, as the French call it—is so called because on the ladybird are seen five black spots, which are supposed to represent the five wounds of our Saviour. Take, again, the common flower which comes in the spring-time, called "Lords and Ladies." Because people fancied they saw thereon the marks of the Passion—the cross and the nails—it was called in this western part of the country "The Lamb in the Pulpit." In these and other instances, we perceive the poetical and religious ideas of the people.

Talking of names which come from religious fancies, we will take a name which will show the reaction of the popular mind from the Roman Catholic religion and observances. We shall see how a number of names have been degraded in this way. Take, for instance, "tawdry"—though, perhaps, that is not exactly a case in point. It is derived from St Audrey, and that from St Ethelred, a saint in whose honour many fairs were held. The articles of finery sold—lace, gowns, and other things—at these fairs, were not of the best quality, though perhaps the most showy, and so things got to be called tawdry, as belonging to St Audrey's fairs,—"Oh, that's the sort of thing you would see at St Audrey's Fair." "Saunter" is perhaps a better

word in illustration of the reaction from Roman Catholicism. Saunter, you know, is to go about listlessly or idly. That comes from "Sainte Terre," the Holy Land. In the days of the Crusades, people who had taken the vow to go to the Holy Land were precluded from doing anything else; they devoted themselves wholly to the object of their vow. Though this may be all very well for persons who intended to go to the Holy Land, it was a very manifest way of escaping all sorts of duties by people who did not intend to go, but wished for an excuse for neglecting their duties. Therefore a large number of people took upon themselves the vow — the profession of going to Sainte Terre, the Holy Land—as an excuse for not doing anything else; but go to Sainte Terre they never did. And thus we get from that practice the words "saunter" and "saunterer."

There are various other names and words which I might quote illustrating the reaction from the Roman Catholic religion; but I find I must cut short this important part of the subject, and I find I must also omit the very interesting and instructive question of "slang," which would afford matter for a dozen lectures. With reference to nicknames, they may be divided again into essential and accidental—nicknames which go to the essence of things, and those which merely touch on accidents. For instance, the Duke of Cumberland was so cruel to the Scotch after he had gained the battle of Culloden, and put so many

Jacobites to death, that he was called "Butcher"—that was an essential nickname; but when the Duke of Wellington was called "Old Nosey," and Admiral Vernon "Old Grogram," mere accidents were taken hold of. Again, you may distinguish nicknames as those which are useful, those which are mischievous, and those which are simply harmless. Those nicknames are useful which supply a part which names ought to fulfil, but do not. If a name does not tell the whole truth, let a nickname, by all means, come in to help it out. You know the old Roman satirist says, "Nothing need prevent a man telling the truth in a laughing spirit." No doubt ridicule is a most influential and important element in the promotion of truth. If you only give nicknames upon the principle of truth, you may depend upon it that they are an engine in which there is very great value. It frequently happens that persons may tell the truth by ironical nicknames which they could not venture to tell in any other way. Many of the old sovereigns of Egypt were called Ptolemy. One was distinguished as Ptolemy Philadelphus—the lover of his brother—because he put his brother to death; and another Ptolemy Philopater, because he put his father to death. Applying these nicknames ironically, the truth was told by those who hardly dared tell it openly. The mischievous nicknames, above all others, are those which are false. A nickname adheres to a person because there is some humour in it which can

be laid hold of; it is not like a common name which slides out of our mind. Therefore, if it is a mischievous nickname, it does serious harm; it conveys a false impression or an insinuation. I have given you an illustration of that in the nickname of "souper." If applied unjustly to a man who is really and truly a convert from conviction, nothing can be more mischievous or detestable than to have an opprobrious insinuation fixed upon him by the application of a name which he does not deserve. You know that some nicknames are accepted by those to whom they are applied, and some are rejected. There is a very important instance, which is perhaps almost too serious to introduce in this lecture, and yet it is one which I may be pardoned introducing, because it is so good an illustration of what I mean. It is with reference to the introduction of a name which all of us are only too grateful to be allowed to bear—that of Christian. There is a very curious history in that name. We are told that "the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch." That was a name imposed—not chosen by themselves—by their enemies, the heathen, at Antioch. Dean Trench shows that it could not have been imposed by the Jews, because they would not have recognised the right of our Saviour to the name of Christ, they would have called His followers Galileans or Nazarenes. It is clear, then, that the name must have been given by the Gentiles, and their imposing it is a proof that Christianity was then making

itself understood, and was spreading, and becoming of importance. The disciples accepted the name, though it was imposed by their enemies, and made it honourable. But some time afterwards an attempt was made to change it again, and then they resisted. When Christianity began to spread over the empire, and the worship of the heathen gods and the idols was scouted by the wisest of mankind, then an attempt was made by the opponents of the true religion to fuse Christianity with the old heathen religion, and to say that they all meant the same thing; that a broad view must be taken of these matters, without consideration of this or that sect, for they all meant the same thing; all desired to worship virtue, and to do honour to that which was true and good in itself. They endeavoured to give Christians the name of "Chrestians," from "Chrestos," the Greek word for good, including all that was good and excellent. If the disciples had submitted to take the name, they would have surrendered all that was distinctive in their position—their adhesion to a particular master. They said they would not take that name. You will find that some of the early Fathers protested with all their might and force against the adoption of a name which conveyed a false impression. That is an instance of those false nicknames against which we should stand out with all our power.

Then, again, there are those nicknames which are mischievous because they gloss over evil, and those

again which are irreverent. The illustrations you can supply for yourselves. Again, there are those which are spiteful, unkindly fastened on personal defects or unfortunate circumstances in a man's personal career, of which we had not better take notice, and which it would be unkind to stir up. Then, again, there are uncivil nicknames; and there are harmless nicknames, such as that given to Admiral Vernon; such nicknames as those which are given to birds and beasts—robin-redbreast, and so on. I think it is a very pretty mark of feeling when we give human names to animals and birds. It seems to recognise that a kind of fellow-feeling exists between birds and animals and ourselves. Nothing is prettier than to speak of the Robin-redbreast and the Jenny-wren. It implies a kindly association between man and the brute creation which it is well to keep up. There is a poetry about it, and a kindly touch of feeling. You know the origin of the story or legend about the robin-redbreast. It is said when our Saviour was going to crucifixion the Robin came to His assistance and plucked one thorn from the crown of thorns, and that the Saviour's blood stained its breast red. This may have given rise to the kind feeling towards the redbreast. That legend may be without any kind of foundation, but tales of this sort you find embodied in the old traditions, and in the names and words in use among the peasantry; and however little science there may be in them, one would be sorry indeed to get rid of them.

I see some young ladies present, and I am afraid I shall be a little below even their mark, but it is not perhaps so very long since they played with a doll. What is "doll" derived from? There is a history in that. St Dorothea was one of the great Roman Catholic saints who was made very much of in olden times, and many children were named after her. This brought the name well into the English language, and it was shortened into Dorothy and Dolly. Then it came to be applied to those little images which were originally called babies, and these were called dolls. When the Puritan reaction came it put out the name Dorothea, so we lost the words Dorothy and Dolly altogether, or very nearly, but we still retain the word doll. Of late years Dorothea has been revived, imported back again from Germany. I will give you another curious history of a name, which shows one how words grow up. Many are familiar with the word "Exchequer." What is the history of that word? It is so called, because in the old days of the Norman kings there was a department into which the king's revenue was brought in money. As people then were not very familiar with writing or figures, the officers used to have a cloth spread on the table at which they sat, marked with squares like a "chess"-board. That was for the purpose of counting; it was easy to put so many coins upon one square and so many upon another. The department was called the Exchequer because of the chequered pattern of

the cloth, which was so named because of its connection with the chess-board. The name of "chequers" or "chess" came from the word *échec*, because the game consisted in continually checking the king. The Spanish had the game through the Saracens, from the Spanish and Arabic *xaque mata*, the king is dead. This shows, then, that the root-word was brought from the East into Spain, imported into France as *xaque mata*, brought into England by the Normans as *echec*, and from thence we get the word Exchequer.

If we take the list of names a nation has in use, it will show their condition. The greater the number of words used, the more advanced is their civilisation. So there is a vast difference in the number of words used by the uneducated and the highly educated classes; and as every word represents an idea, it shows a number of ideas in use by those classes. So we see again in the words used an indication of the opinion which one nation has of another, when we hear of one speaking of another as barbarian, and so forth. In fact, this subject is inexhaustible. I have endeavoured as far as I can to open to you some of the ideas connected with it, in the hope that some of you may be induced to follow it up for yourselves. I look upon it that lectures of this kind are of use in stimulating people's minds to consider such subjects for themselves. People sometimes say, "What is the use of literary societies and mechanics' institutes? If you have courses of lectures upon chemistry and so

forth, they are not of a kind to get the mass of the people to attend. If merely a casual lecture is given, persons coming in for a single evening, and hearing what there is to be said on a single subject, must necessarily gain but a superficial acquaintance with it, and it can do them little good." I venture to say, standing here to-night as representing the superficial class of lecturers, that lectures of this kind, if you take them rightly, may do some good—may suggest to persons who have not had their minds drawn to the matter, subjects of study which it is just as well they should follow out. I have endeavoured to open to you a number of modes of looking at a subject of this kind, which, if you will follow up for yourselves, you will find extremely interesting and extremely profitable. The study of words is the study of things; the study of names is the study of ideas. The more you think about names and their use, the more careful you will be to reject what is false, the more you will seek what is true, and the better it will be for your own intellectual condition—not your intellectual condition only, but, I venture even to say, your moral and spiritual condition. You know quite well what universal interest is felt in them; how every one in his own sphere thinks about the name that is given to him; how he feels every opprobrious name; how he desires to perpetuate his name, to gain an honourable name; how people, as Milton says,

"Scorn delight, and live laborious days,"

in order to gain a name which shall endure to posterity. You know how even the humblest ranks desire that their names shall not wholly be forgotten, and desire that they may be handed down to their children.

> "For who, to dumb forgetfulness a prey,
> This pleasing anxious being e'er resigned,
> Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,
> Nor cast one longing lingering look behind?"

There is no person but has some desire for, and some appreciation of, a good name.

Think, again, of the number who have died for a name. There is that magic about the name of a party leader that people have been willing to lay down their lives even for a party whose principles they did not thoroughly understand, or for a leader they never saw. We know that names have an influence over mankind which we cannot ignore. We cannot doubt we are dealing with powers when we are using them. We must not throw them as stones and arrows about, like the madman who scattered fire and said, "Am I not in sport?" If we play with sacred and holy things, if we appeal to the feelings of men and gather up together all the ideas of a man, what mischief may we not be doing? And, on the other hand, what good may we not do if we strive honestly, courageously, to give true, good, and honourable names to what is virtuous and true, ugly and dishonourable names to what is bad? At the same time,

let us be careful how we use names which are not fairly imputable to people. Consider the two principles which ought to guide us—two, and yet one—the principle of truth and the principle of charity. The principle of truth, which would lead us, whether speaking of a man, whether speaking of a thing, whether speaking of ourselves or of others—of persons, places, animals, things, or ideas—to use true, right names, which faithfully distinguish and describe. And in the second place, the principle of charity—which involves in itself the principle of truth, as it does all other virtues, of which it is a part—the principle of charity requires that we should speak the truth of everything; for it is no charity to conceal the worst features and use softening names when we ought to use harsh names. The principle of charity induces us to put the best construction on everything which others do; induces us not to affix to others names which are unfair and unjust, which are stigmas, and which prejudice people in the eyes of those who know nothing of them but through the names given them. Thus we should endeavour to combine these two principles of truth and charity, both in the use of names we give, and—as we must not set aside the power of ridicule when properly applied—in the choice of the nicknames we bestow.

X.

ARCHÆOLOGY OF DEVON AND CORNWALL.

INAUGURAL ADDRESS

DELIVERED AT THE

CONGRESS OF THE BRITISH ARCHÆOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION.

HELD AT EXETER, AUGUST 1861.

THE inaugural address was delivered by Sir Stafford Henry Northcote at the Congress at Exeter, in August 1861, Sir Stafford being President of the Society for the year.

I COULD have wished that this meeting had commenced, or rather, that the meeting which has begun could have been continued where it was commenced, at the Guildhall; which, for a purpose such as the present, would undoubtedly have been the most appropriate place for our reception by the mayor and corporation, and for the inauguration of proceedings of an archæological character. But this is one of

those cases in which we have had to consider the habits of modern civilisation, and to ascertain where the ladies who honour us with their presence could find the most comfortable reception. I am pleased to see that this room, which has so often been the stage of your festive gatherings, but which is now the scene of something which I will not call serious—but which, nevertheless, approaches to the nature of business—is so well filled by the ladies, who thus show the interest which they take in our proceedings; because we know that nothing in this world prospers heartily and well unless the ladies are kind enough to take an interest in it. I must begin what I have to say by mentioning to those who had not the advantage of being present, that we, the members of the British Archæological Association, have already been received in the most hospitable manner at the Guildhall, by the mayor of this city; that we were entertained in a manner which I am sure all would, for the credit of the city, have approved of; and that the Association has received at the hands of the corporation a very elegant and interesting present,—a present of the book I now hold, being the 'Description of the Guildhall at Exeter,' by two friends of ours, whose names I am glad to take this opportunity of commemorating; whose names I am sure you will all receive with interest, and whom we cannot but regret that we are now unable any longer to see amongst us—I mean our two lately departed friends, the Rev. Dr Oliver and Mr

Pitman Jones. They are names that I am sure are so well known, not only to every Devonian and Exonian but to every archæologist, that I need not make any apology for introducing them at this moment, and for saying that if there is anything which mars the pleasure we have in receiving the Association on the present occasion, it is the thought that men who had so peculiar a claim to have stood forward as the representatives of the archæologists of Devonshire, are no longer amongst us.

On looking back at the records of the proceedings of this Association on former occasions, I find that it has been the habit of those who have held the office which now I have the honour to fill, to commence the business by addressing to the Association something in the nature of an inaugural address, in which they have pointed out the particular objects of interest which the district visited contains, and in which they have brought to the notice of the visitors a great many matters of interest and importance. I wish very much it were in my power to follow the example of my predecessors in this respect. I wish very much I could emulate some of the very learned and able addresses which I have read, delivered by them on occasions such as the present. But I feel that it is really beyond my power; and I do not wish to essay anything in which I know that I should fail. If I were to attempt to address the eminent body whom I unworthily represent, upon the

subject of their peculiar study, I should run the risk of being as ridiculous as the sophist who gave a lecture on the art of war to the celebrated general Hannibal. As I do not wish to expose myself by attempting that which I am incompetent to perform, I shall endeavour in my few remarks to confine myself as much as possible to the humbler province of introducing the Association to my own county, and of introducing my own county to the Association; and if I do venture to touch upon matters antiquarian or archæological, I beg to assure the experts that I do so, not for the purpose of offering any remarks that may enlighten, but rather to show them what is the depth of ignorance which they have to penetrate and dispel by coming amongst us, and that I look upon myself, and request them to look upon me, in the light of what has been called by an eminent statesman in a saying which doubtless many of you are familiar with—a foolometer. By seeing the depth of my ignorance they may gauge the necessity for enlightening us upon these interesting topics. I introduce the society to you, my fellow Devonians and Exonians; and I do so in the perfect confidence that you will feel great pleasure, and will derive great profit, from following these eminent men in the investigations which they are about to make in different parts of the county. I feel sure that the observations which they will make in your presence will open your eyes to many things which you have probably been in the

habit of passing unregarded from day to day, and will open out to you new sources of interest which, perhaps, you hardly conceived were within your grasp. And I introduce my own county, and this picturesque and ancient city, to the Association, in the full and confident hope that they will find them not less rich in the materials of archæological lore than any other county or any other city which they have been heretofore in the habit of visiting. There is only one danger against which I must warn them: they must not allow themselves to be too much led away by the beauties of nature from the pursuit of those peculiar objects which they come to seek; for I must warn them, if they are not aware of it, that they are going, as I see by the programme, to visit objects of interest in the midst of most lovely scenery, and they must take care not to allow the scenery to interfere too much with the archæological curiosities they are going to seek.

It does not require that we should be very deep archæologists ourselves to enjoy an archæological gathering like the present. The truth is, that this science is one of the most natural, and, I think I may say, one of the most rational, that men can engage in. We are naturally curious to know how it is that we find ourselves in the position in which we are; and it is impossible that we can understand rightly what we are unless we know how it is that we have come to be that which we are. We find that we have stepped

into a rich inheritance, like the people of Israel, who entered into a land full of treasures which they had not collected.. We find that our forefathers have collected for us that which adds to the enjoyment and the interest of life; and beyond that, we find ourselves continually adding to, and improving and advancing upon, that which they have left us. That, it appears to me, is what distinguishes men from the brute creation. I have always thought one of the most interesting definitions of man was that which represents him to be a being looking forward and backward, not looking merely to that which is around him, but considering the progress that he has made, or that his forefathers have made, and what progress he is himself called on to make. It is that which distinguishes man's works from the wonderful works done by animal instinct. If we look at the works of animals, at the works of the brute creation, we find that beavers construct their houses, that birds build their nests, and that other animals perform their different works, precisely as they have done from the beginning of the world. But we are continually advancing; leaving behind us that which was done for us by our ancestors, and advancing from it to something which we shall hand down to posterity. It is because archæology is the science which leads us to appreciate this progress, which leads us to see and know what was done by our ancestors, and therefore points out to us the work we are to carry on for the

benefit of posterity, that it is a noble and interesting and elevating science. Let me ask you, in illustration of what I have said, to try to conceive the different kinds of discoveries that an archæologist would make in countries differently circumstanced in respect of progress. Suppose that you make archæological inquiries in a country which has been for a number of years in a stationary condition—such, for instance, as the great empire of China—consider what the nature of your archæological discoveries would be. Very probably you would there find exactly that which is in daily use in our own day, only a little more mouldy and moth-eaten, and sullied and defaced by time. Then take the case of countries which have been the seats of great empires, where the highest civilisation has been attained in former times, but where there has been since a decay and relapse into barbarism. Witness Nineveh and Babylon and Asia Minor, and consider what a melancholy state of things it is when you find amongst a people now barbarous the relics of bygone civilisation; traces of the decay of morality, and the decay of power, amongst a people once so favoured. Contrast with these two such a country as our own, in which you have a progressive state, in which you look back to a state of things which causes you neither to blush for your ancestors, nor to blush for yourselves in respect of your improvements upon your ancestors; a country where you are able to look back through a long vista

of improvements, gradually progressing and developing into the more perfect state in which you now find yourselves, and which at the same time affords you lessons of encouragement and lessons of humility. I say that all these are the kinds of lessons that you may gather from the archæological studies to which we invite you. I am quite certain that these studies are to be found not only attractive in detail, but that they are interesting in the larger view which moralists would naturally take,—that they should not be regarded as a mere pastime of the moment, but should be looked upon as a serious and important branch of human study. Archæology is one of the tributaries of history. It is one of our greatest objects to throw light, by the investigations we are able to make, upon the history of human progress.

We find in such a country as I have described—a country in a continually progressive state—archæological relics of two different kinds. You will find some remains which are so old, which belong to a time so far bygone, that they excite in us little else than wonder. You find others which carry us on continuously up to the present day, and seem to have a more living and present interest for us. Of both these we have specimens in this county. We have specimens upon Dartmoor of the old remains of a bygone time, upon which we may exhaust ourselves in speculation, but which do not seem to touch us with anything like present and living interest. On

the other hand, we have in every town, in every old church, sometimes in our old houses, and even by the wayside, memorials of times more or less remote, but still with which we seem to feel that we have a connection. In both these classes of memorials there is an interest; but it is a different kind of interest which we have to awaken in the one and in the other. I venture to say that the county of Devon furnishes the archæologist with very important and very interesting classes of study; for here it is, if anywhere, that we are to look for the earliest traces of the original inhabitants of this land of Britain. Here in this south-west corner of England, if there are any traces to be found of the earliest inhabitants of the country, we are to look for them. There can be no doubt that the earliest notices which can in any way be considered to apply to England in classical writings, have reference to the Scilly Isles—probably to Cornwall; and if to Cornwall, probably also to the whole or great part of Devonshire. It appears that, in days long before the time of the Roman conquest, there were communications between the tin-producing districts—the "tin islands," as they were called, the Scilly Isles and Cornwall and Devonshire—and the Eastern nations. We find that the Phœnicians and the Carthaginians traded with the Cassiterides, or tin islands. From all we can gather, it would seem that the tin islands referred to were the Scilly Islands and that portion of England which I have been speaking of. In a very

old book, attributed to the poet Orpheus, describing the expedition of the Argonauts, and in the works of the father of history, Herodotus, we find references to communications between the ancient world and this part of England. I must not lay too much stress upon all the legends and traditions connected with the intercourse; but undoubtedly there are a great many circumstances, small in themselves, yet all bearing in the same direction, which seem to point to a connection between this south-west of England and an Eastern origin. I daresay I should provoke a smile at my credulity if I referred to old legends about the original colonisation of this country by Brutus and the Trojans who came with him. But the legend is worth some consideration. It says that some time after the destruction of Troy, Brutus, the grandson of Æneas, came with his followers and landed at Totnes. What is there peculiar about this? No doubt the story about Brutus and the Trojan descent was put afloat for the sake of getting a high and noble origin for the people of Britain; but there is something remarkable in the chroniclers having fixed upon Totnes as the place to which the colony was supposed to have come. Totnes lies far up the Dart. Why should the expedition be brought to a place far up the river, and not to a point on the sea-coast? That reminds us that Totnes was an ancient British town. No doubt it is a town of very high antiquity. It lies also conveniently for the trade of Dartmoor. And this chimes

in with evidence we have that there was a connection between Eastern nations and the tin-producing districts of Dartmoor; for it is upon Dartmoor and the neighbourhood that you find remains of tin-works, which appear to be of very high antiquity. That, I say, is one slight evidence which we have of the connection between our people and the East.

Then, again, there are those records which are more authentic, and upon which we can rely, of the trade which sprang up between the Phœnicians and the Carthaginians with our own country. The Phœnicians preserved a strict monopoly of this trade. Herodotus says that the other nations were not able to discover where it was that this tin was brought from. We are told at a later period, that, when the Carthaginians, as a Phœnician colony, had got possession of the trade, they kept it so secret that the Romans, who endeavoured to ascertain where the metal came from, were unable to do so. Scipio the younger, who made inquiries, was told that the Gauls and others knew nothing of the district. There was a story current, and probably a true one, that a Carthaginian ship engaged in this traffic, being pursued by a Roman vessel, ran aground in order to prevent its track being discovered; and that the Carthaginian people were so pleased with the patriotism of this man, who had wrecked his vessel rather than let the secret be discovered, that by national contributions they made up the loss to him. Such matters are of interest, because

they directly bring to our minds one of those touches of nature which make the whole world akin. It is a specimen of that commercial jealousy which, from the very earliest ages of the world, has been found to prevail among commercial nations. The Greeks, the Carthaginians, the Portuguese, the Spanish, the Venetians, the Dutch, all desired to preserve strict secrecy with regard to the sources whence their wealth was derived.

The secret so well kept by the Carthaginians was afterwards discovered by the Greeks, and at a later period by the Romans. But the identity of Britain with the Cassiterides could not have been discovered by the Romans before the invasion of Britain by Cæsar. As far as we can judge from history, it does not appear that Cæsar, when he invaded this country, was conscious that he had got into the great tin-producing land; because we are told that he believed, when he first came, he was invading a country full of wealth, and that afterwards he was disappointed. There are writings of Cicero in which he says the country was poor, and that it was a delusion to suppose there was anything to be found in it, especially silver, which there was great expectation of discovering. It does not seem that Cæsar got down to this south-western part. It was much later that the Romans came here; but we have some curious evidence on the part of other historians, especially Diodorus, that Danmonium, which comprised Devonshire

and Cornwall, was a country already in communication with foreign parts; that it was more given to trade, and more civilised, and that its inhabitants were more hospitable people than the rest of the Britons. The Britons generally were savage, rude, and inhospitable; but these Danmonii were more polished and more civilised. It is, perhaps, one of the reasons that may account for there being fewer Roman remains to be found here, that there was less necessity for the Romans to plant themselves here in force in order to keep this part of the country in subjection; they were on more friendly terms with this part of the country than they were with some others.

These are evidences which we have of the early connection of this part of the country with the navigators and commercial nations of the East. Then there are many other small evidences of the same connection. Some of them may perhaps be fanciful; others have something in them. We hope that those who come here with the power and the habit of testing and sifting evidence, will enable us to judge for ourselves how far these matters, which we have been taught to regard as more or less important, have any real worth. For instance, there is the evidence of names. Polwhele, who is perhaps our best local historian, traces a Phœnician origin in everything—in names, in places, in everything to be found in the west of England; and we should like to know how far there is any truth in the analogies which he

discovers; because we do know that the science of etymology, the comparison of one language with another, often affords the means of ascertaining the connection between one people and another. I should be glad to know if there is any truth in the origin which he ascribes to the names Hartland Point, Start Point, Belston, and others, which he supposes to contain traces of Phœnician worship; Start Point referring to Astarte, Hartland Point to Hercules, and Belston to Belus. He speaks of double pillars at Hartland and Start Point, and connects them with the Phœnician worship of the sun and moon, and with the celebrated Phœnician pillars of Hercules. We know that at Cadiz, a point to which the Phœnicians attained in Spain, there were two pillars—the two pillars of Hercules, one of the great landmarks of the ancient world. These were pillars connected no doubt with Phœnician worship. Polwhele supposes that there were two pillars at Hartland Point, and he speaks of there being the remains of such pillars at Start Point even now. I do not know whether such is the case; but it is a matter for the curious to inquire into. He sees in these double pillars traces of the Phœnician worship having been introduced into this country. One would be glad to know how far there are traces of anything that is decidedly Eastern, and that is not to be attributed to our neighbours, the Gauls. Then there are the remains of Druidical worship to be found on Dartmoor; and we should be glad

to know whether, on a comparison of these remains with others elsewhere, there is any such connection or difference between them that should lead us to suppose they were the work of one people rather than two. We should like to know whether the great work of Stonehenge all belonged to one period, or was placed there by two races; and if so, we should be glad to know to which period the Dartmoor works belong—whether to the earlier or the later,—in what the difference consists, and whether it is of such a character as to lead us to suppose that one race was or was not Eastern in its origin. Cæsar mentions that there had been an invasion shortly before his time by the Belgæ from Gaul, who had driven the aboriginal inhabitants into the interior, and perhaps to the south-west. Looking to another point, we may ask who these aboriginals were? Were they people of Eastern origin? If not, are they to be considered people who had had an Eastern impress made upon them by communication with the Phœnicians? You may put any number of things together in this kind of inquiry; for archæology is of all studies the one which seems to me the best described by Shakespeare's saying, that

> "Trifles, light as air, may be confirmation strong
> As proofs of holy writ."

You may find any number of small points, each insignificant, apparently absurd, if you take it by itself,

yet if you put them together, compare them, collate them with what has been discovered in other parts of the country, they produce, by degrees, first doubt, then suspicion, and then a moral certainty which almost amounts to the strength of demonstration. One would be glad that all these things should be recorded; that theories, however absurd in themselves, should be put forth and discussed, and everything that can be brought forward to support these theories be brought forth and stated, in order to determine what is really valuable and really true. Because there is this that is peculiar in this kind of study; and it is, I really think, an indication that archæology may be made a very fine and noble training for the intellectual powers and for the judgment of man—that you have to combine such different qualities in order to make a perfect archæologist. You require not only a great amount of knowledge—that, I am aware, is essential—with a great amount of industry, necessary in all studies; but you require a combination of imagination and of judgment, of enthusiasm and of scepticism. You want two kinds of archæologists—positive and negative. You want poets and you want critics. I do not believe you ever make discoveries, unless you make them with a view to some theory. A man lays down a theory, as Polwhele laid down his theory that we had a Phœnician origin; and in order to make out his theory he collected with great enthusiasm every kind of proof he could accu-

mulate—some very weak and shallow no doubt, but others having, perhaps, something in them. At all events he collected a great number of facts, which he would otherwise have thought of little or no value; and he collected them with interest, because he looked upon them as having an important bearing upon his theory. In that way you get facts together; and then you want to bring to bear upon them critical scepticism, blowing to the winds those which do not bear investigation. But if you had criticism only you never would discover anything. Invention and discovery, after all, are very closely related; but you want to discover, you do not want to invent, and the great danger is lest discovery should run into invention, because some habits of mind will no doubt lead persons from one to the other. We must take great care that we neither repress and chill the discoverer, by throwing cold water, and looking with a smile upon his extravagances; nor, on the other hand, allow ourselves to be led away by those extravagances. That is the great use of such societies as the present. They come down with a large accumulation of experience. They are able, in the first place, to do much service in the district by exciting an interest. They cannot themselves—it is utterly impossible in the short time they have—make any great amount of discoveries. But what they can do is this. They can excite in the minds of a large number who live on the spot an interest in the sub-

ject which they themselves take an interest in. They can set these people on the track of discovery, and then when discoveries, or supposed discoveries, are made, the Association come from time to time to see how their disciples in the provinces are going on, reviewing the work, and ascertaining whether there is anything in all this matter collected, taking up the heap of sand and sifting it, to see if there are a few grains of gold in it. So in that way, by stimulating and criticising, they may do real service towards the collection of materials for a good history of our own county and our own locality. I am told that none of the histories we have of Devonshire and Exeter are worthy—I will not say worthy of the name of histories; but, at all events, not such as we ought to have. They are not such as in the present state of the science, and with the present advantages we have, we ought to be content with. But what our friends who now come down are anxious we should do is, that we should set to work, each in his different locality, each as he is able, to make collections, to make inquiries, to excite an interest for the preservation of our ancient monuments, and for the discovery of those matters which are in danger of being lost and overwhelmed amongst us, and for the purpose of bringing these things together, in order that those who take a wider range, who look over a greater extent of country and compare discoveries made in one part with discoveries made in another, may be

able to ascertain the real histories of these matters. There are many of the points which I have glanced at that well deserve your attention. We know very well what service has been done by one who has been for some years removed from us—Mr Rowe, of Crediton. The little book he published—the 'Perambulation of Dartmoor'—is not only a useful handbook for tourists, but contains a great deal of curious information which I should be very sorry to see perish from amongst us—a book which may live for ages and contribute its part to the materials which we hope to collect for a county history. And consider what others of you may do. When one looks at the collection in this room and sees the records of old monuments which have been removed—records of places taken away in the necessary course of improvement—one perceives how much you could do by securing drawings of various antiquities which still remain, to be circulated in other parts of the country, and used also as records in case those things should be destroyed. Let me also remind you how important an aid photography is to archæology; for with the greatest ease you are now enabled to preserve accurate recollections of those monuments, whether of art or of nature, which you feel an interest in. It is really throwing away this great machine, this great power put into your hands, unless you make some use of it for so very interesting a purpose as the preservation of accurate records of monuments,

all of which are gradually decaying, while some of them may perish by accident or disappear in the course of improvements. Again, there is another class of antiquities which you may assist in preserving, which perishes very easily, and which the march of civilisation has a tendency to efface—I mean old language, old words, old expressions, old customs, old superstitions even, everything that can connect us with the manners and customs of our early ancestors. For instance, how little is preserved of the old Cornish language! There we had, probably, the oldest language spoken in England; there we possessed the materials for tracing whether there were any truth or not in the supposed connection between Cornwall and the Eastern nations. A great deal that has been allowed to perish there might have been preserved; and what one hopes is that that which still remains may be preserved, with a view to the collection of such materials as I have suggested.

I will not venture to go into the various questions which Polwhele raises with regard to the Druidical remains on Dartmoor. I am happy to find that the Association are going to pay a visit to that locality, and that a most interesting and valuable paper by Sir Gardner Wilkinson upon that very extraordinary district will be read in the course of the proceedings. I feel, therefore, quite satisfied that we shall have the matter thoroughly exhausted, and it would be wasting your time if I were to offer any observations upon it.

Only let me say first, as I have expressed the hope that you will not be led away by the beauty of the scenery in other parts of the county, so now let me wish that when you are upon Dartmoor you may have clear weather, for if there should be a mist it is very little that you will see. Secondly, it is obvious to all that we must be on our guard, in visiting such places, not to confound the curious formations of nature with works of the Druids. No doubt, as was said by one of our writers, Dartmoor is a natural Druidical temple —one great mass of logan-stones and rock-idols, and pillars and basins—and it requires the critical faculty to consider how much of this is natural and how much artificial. Though, again, it does not follow from these rocks being natural that they were not used by the Druids as their place of worship. But we must neither be ready to take a natural rock as an artificial idol, nor, on the other hand, entirely to disregard any tradition which connects the natural rock with some Druidical ceremonies. There is no doubt that in these stones and collections much will be found to remind you of what were the habits of the earlier and Eastern nations—much to remind you in these monumental pillars and cairns and stones of the Jews, and of the records of the Old Testament, where we read of the pillars of Jacob and Laban, and the pillars put up by the Israelites when they crossed the Jordan, and many others which will readily occur to you. No doubt, if the Phœnicians did impress upon our early ancestors

any of their own system of worship, we may expect to find on Belston and such places stones to the memory or for the worship of the god Belus, or some other of the Phœnician deities. But upon all these points you will exercise strict inquiry. I must apologise for having ventured so far into the matter. In opening the subject as one of interest, it is rather for the purpose of exciting those among you who do not know Dartmoor to go and see for yourselves, than to venture to suggest any theory.

Even upon Dartmoor, though I said it was chiefly a place connected with the archæology of wonder, even there we find a good deal of human interest—an interest of a much more modern kind than that which relates to Druidical remains. There is that curious place Crockern Tor. It is a place in which we have a more general interest, because there the Stannary parliaments were held. This opens up a curious chapter of history. They were parliaments that used to meet in the open air in this wild spot, many miles from any town. There was the judge's chair, with the steps to go up to it, a good deal destroyed of late years. Then there was a cellar underneath, in which the parliament used to keep their wine, a sort of refreshment-room for the occasion. There they used to meet and hold their parliament, and make laws for the Stannaries—that is, for the tinners. Representatives were sent from four towns in Devonshire—Chagford, Ashburton, Tavistock, and Lydford—we do not

know of any Cornish mines being represented, and they held their Stannary parliament on Crockern Tor.. A most interesting chapter in the history of Devonshire might be devoted to these Stannary courts, and to the history of the tin trade, which must form a prominent feature in any such work. The tin trade carries us back, as we have seen, to the time of the Carthaginian intercourse; and coming down to later times, we meet with charters of King John respecting the privileges of the Duchy of Cornwall, and of Richard, King of the Romans, first Duke of Cornwall. Then there were disputes between the clergy and the Dukes of Cornwall with reference to some questions at issue between them. Altogether you would find it a most interesting chapter, illustrating English history below the surface of affairs from the time of King John even to the present, because the Stannary courts still form an anomalous and abnormal feature in our system. The manner in which the tinners exercised their powers at these Stannary parliaments was very remarkable. There is a curious statute passed by them in the time of Henry VII., when Arthur, eldest son of Henry, was Duke of Cornwall. The statute, as given by Mr Rowe, is very curious. It contains a variety of provisions, one of which is to exclude all persons from owning mines who were possessed of £10 a-year; also all clergy and officials of the duchy. Another very singular clause prohibited all persons learned in the law from practising in the Stannary

court. Mr Rowe apparently does not approve of that clause. He speaks of it as strong evidence that it was a *parliamentum indoctum*. Whether it was altogether wise or unwise to prohibit the lawyers from practising in these courts one hardly knows. But, at all events, it connects itself with other matters, with regard to which there can be no question. You have all heard of Lydford law. Lydford, which was the old prison for the Stannaries, seems to have been a very wretched place :—

> "We oft have heard of Lydford law,
> Where in the morn they hang and draw,
> And sit in judgment after."

Lydford appears to have been a place very much abused. Even in Edward III.'s time, petitions were presented against the system by which debtors imprisoned in Lydford Castle were kept there ten years. The jail delivery being only once in ten years, it was a serious kind of imprisonment. Shortly after the time of the statute I have mentioned, the Stannaries parliament actually ventured to encroach upon the privileges of the House of Commons. We are told that Mr Strode of Newnham, member for Plympton Erle, having exerted himself in Parliament to prevent the tin-miners from blocking up the harbours with their streaming, the tinners proceeded against him for some imaginary breach of the Stannary laws, threw him into Lydford jail, and kept him there for some time. The result was that Parliament was obliged to

interfere, and a statute was passed, crippling and limiting the power of the Stannary parliaments for the future. These I mention as instances of the curious circumstances which you may bring to light by a good history of the Stannaries, including this place at Lydford, and other matters connected with it. And here I may observe, that I understand we in this county, though not very rich in stone works, buildings, and so forth, of great antiquity, have one great treasure in a good collection of records, especially in Exeter. I am told that Exeter is very rich in records, and certainly the inhabitants ought to take steps for collecting, publishing, and making them known for the good of the city. Possibly among other records might be found some bearing upon this question of the Stannary parliaments. There is one other point. I have said there are many things of interest on Dartmoor. There is one in particular. In other parts of England you find better remains of religious buildings, but one thing on Dartmoor is very interesting and very peculiar—that is, the remains of the old huts, the habitations of the early Britons. You find at Grimspound walled enclosures, containing circular foundations of huts. Nothing remains but the foundations, but these undoubtedly appear to have been the huts of the early Britons. It is interesting when you consider that you have there the earliest habitations known to exist in this country. The poet of the moor, Carrington, says :—

"The moor boasts not
The rich Corinthian colonnade, superb
In ruin, nor the mould'ring temple still
The wonder of the nations. Yet even here
Man—rude, untutored man—has lived, and left
Rough traces of existence. Let me pause
Among these roofless huts, these feeble walls
Thus solitary, thus decayed, amid
The silent flight of ages. In these once
The fierce Danmonii dwelt."

Here, then, we have the remains of our very earliest ancestors. We find nothing but stone foundations, nothing of the superstructure. Perhaps the superstructure was of less permanent material than the foundation; if so, then comes the question, what could it have been?

That leads me to mention the name of another departed friend, Mr Richard Ford. You remember his very interesting article upon "Cob Walls." There is a great deal of learning in the article, which appeared in the 'Quarterly Review' twenty years ago. It may have faded from the memory of some, but it is quite worth while to refresh your recollection of it. He traces the origin of cob to the very earliest times; and he traces it, curiously enough, from the Phœnicians along both sides of the Mediterranean Sea, to Carthage and to Spain; and then he brings it over, leaps over, from the Pillars of Hercules to the south-west of England. One does not know very much of it; but still these are so many straws, all seeming to set one way. Here there certainly does seem some

reason to suppose that this institution (for it is really a county institution) of cob walls may have come to us from these same people, the Phœnicians. If we go further into this matter, we find other things that may appear too trifling to mention, but which still suggest the idea that there is something of an Eastern origin in many of our practices. There is one matter which, under any circumstances, I recommend our visitors to make themselves acquainted with, whether it is of Phœnician antiquity or not—I mean our clouted cream. It is a very good thing in itself; therefore they will not be doing any harm in investigating it rather carefully. But it is said that clouted cream is to be found nowhere except in the west of England and in the neighbourhood of Tyre. There are some curious little circumstances connected with it. We know the old name of cheese, which appears to have been something like compressed milk, is τυρος or Tyre; and again, butter, βουτυρον, which is a compound of βους and τυρος. Then, in the composition of the stuff which they make in India, *ghee*, they put in sour milk, called "tyre." A description is given in one of the ancient writers—Pliny, I think—of the way of making butter, and of a substance which he calls "oxygala," a very close relative of clouted cream. He mentions that butter was not originally known to the Greeks or Romans, who acquired it from the barbarous nations. According to his description, the ancients made oxygala exactly in the way that we

make clouted cream, by warming the milk over the fire. So there are two or three little matters which seem to connect Tyre and its neighbourhood with the clouted cream of Devonshire. Then there is another matter one may mention. I believe there have been discovered, in some old barrows, especially on Haldon, remains of pottery, some of which have had a resemblance to Eastern pottery; and, among other things, remains of glass and glass beads. Now glass was one of the earliest manufactures of Tyre; and here again is one of those little indications which seem to connect us with Eastern nations. I daresay half these things are worth nothing; but they still seem to tend one way. One feels a sort of revolt at the sweeping manner in which Gibbon, in his history, disposes of all these stories of Eastern origin. He says the common-sense of his age was content to see in Britain the colony of the Gauls; that this country was colonised only by the Gauls. And a glance at the map shows that that is the way in which it should be naturally colonised. But at least it is worth while to consider whether there are not sufficient grounds for reviewing this opinion, and considering whether there may not be something more in the Eastern origin attributed to us.

There are undoubtedly other grounds of interest which we have in this county. But I may mention one in which I think we cannot help feeling sympathy; and it is this: that this south-west corner of

England has been the corner in which, in so many of our great national revolutions, the oppressed and conquered people have found a last refuge to betake themselves. It was long before the Britons were expelled from this part of the country. For the first century of the Saxon dominion, when they were pagans, it was here in Exeter and the western portion of Devon, that the Christians, and especially the clergy, appear to have found refuge. It is said by one of the old historians, that for more than a century Exeter was known by the name of Monkton, as a place occupied by many monks. That is stated by one of our antiquaries, Hoker. Whether it can be confirmed or not I do not know; but it appears there were a very large number of old British monks who took refuge in this city and neighbourhood, especially at Crediton, from the persecution of the pagan Saxons. Of the early British Church, and of the Church subsequent to the conversion of the Saxons, you will still find traces in Devonshire. At a later period, when the Normans swept over the country, Githa, mother of Harold, took refuge here after the battle of Hastings. It was some time before the Normans conquered Exeter, and the account of their taking it stands much to our credit. The inhabitants offered a gallant resistance, and the terms obtained were very much superior to those granted by the Normans anywhere else. Whether, as is stated by some, the castle of Rougemont existed before that time, and merely

changed gates in token of its submission, or whether the castle was built then from the ruins of the houses destroyed, is a question upon which I cannot offer an opinion. But it is interesting to know what the date of the castle is; and no doubt we shall have considerable light thrown upon it in the course of the present visit. This at least we know, that the Normans were obliged to bridle the county with castles: at Totnes, Berry Pomeroy, Dartmouth, Plympton, and other places, especially at points commanding the rivers. These, then, were two great waves of conquest that passed over England, in which the national party found refuge in this part of the country. One cannot therefore help feeling that there is a special interest in this county, as being the last refuge of liberty and national spirit. There has been no other invasion similar to these; but there has been more than one occasion upon which Exeter has shown its loyalty to the sovereign, and earned its motto of "Semper Fidelis," and a further occasion on which they offered the rite of hospitality to the Queen of Charles I., as aforetime to the mother of Harold. It was here that Queen Henrietta Maria, during the middle of the great troubles, came to be confined, and gave birth to the princess whose baptism is always commemorated by that font which we have preserved in the cathedral. Here, in the west of England, almost the last stand was made by Devonshire and Cornwall men—Sir Bevil Grenville, Sir R. Hopton, and others—in behalf

of King Charles. It was from this county that the restorer of the monarchy, Monk, Duke of Albemarle, came.

There is another period of history to which we may turn with even more pride and interest—that is the reign of Elizabeth, when Devonshire produced those great worthies, Drake, Hawkins, Raleigh, Gilbert, who maintained the supremacy of England on the seas, and hurled back the naval power of Spain. You may almost fancy that the heroes of early times were reproducing themselves, and found a parallel in these men. When you see Drake going forth from Plymouth to contend with the gigantic power of Spain, it almost reminds you of the feats of Corineus in hurling down Gogmagog from the Plymouth cliff. Raleigh's setting out from the Dart to colonise the West, almost brings back to us the landing in the Dart of our supposed colonisers from the East. We find remains of these great men still amongst us; and the remains possess for us a human interest. At the old house at Fardell, so much occupied by Sir Walter Raleigh, we have monuments of him. Of Gilbert we have relics at Compton. Plymouth possesses records of Drake—if in nothing else, at least in the waterworks which he brought into the town; and in North Devon are remains of Sir Bevil Grenville. So that everywhere there are traces of those men who made Devonshire celebrated in that day, and gained for it a proud position. Side by side with your antiquarian re-

searches, look about and see whether there are not traces of these heroes to be found. And remember when you are treading upon this soil you may perhaps be appropriately addressed in the words of that noble epitaph put up by the Prince de Condé over his adversary the Count de Mercy—"Siste viator! heroem calcas"—"Stop, traveller! you are treading upon the dust of a hero." In many places you will be treading upon the dust of heroes. Remember what we have to be proud of. I trust there is no Devonshire man who will not do his part to preserve the records of his ancestors, as something to which he may turn, to which he may point, and which may be an encouragement to his children after him to persevere in the course so well marked out by them.

You have missed a great many opportunities, in this city, of forming a good museum of antiquities. I am sorry to say there are very few things left amongst us: they have gone elsewhere. I was asked to get the Department of Science and Art to send us down the panelling of an old room in Exeter, of which they have obtained possession, and which would undoubtedly have been a beautiful ornament on the present occasion. But they were not able to spare it. We ought never to have let such a thing go. We ought to have had it. Here one of our vice-presidents, Mr Pettigrew, comes down and flourishes in our faces a number of *penates* which he has picked up, and which belong to Exeter—our own household

gods. I suppose we should not be justified in laying violent hands upon them: we must not violate the first principle of morality. But look at them, and blush that you let them go from Exeter. They are very curious remains of the old Romans in Exeter, and they have gone to London. It is rather late, perhaps, to begin. It is like asking you to shut the stable-door after the steed is stolen. Still it is never too late to mend. We may be able hereafter to discover other remains. There are a few still in our neighbourhood, in the possession of societies connected with us, which might, perhaps, form the nucleus of such a museum. If there were a proper museum, a proper place of deposit, you would find that many persons would come forward and make gifts to add to that collection. Of course the whole interest of a collection depends upon its being a collection. There is very little interest in one man having an old brass pot in his drawing-room, and another a few coins in his bureau, when compared with that of seeing all those things placed together in connection one with the other. But at the same time, all honour to those who keep these things in their own rooms, and preserve them somehow. No doubt the spirit which led them to preserve them under difficulties, will, as soon as a proper museum is ready, induce them to come voluntarily forward and place them where they will be a credit to the town and the neighbourhood. But I do not feel that I ought to say much more upon this

matter. Perhaps you will think that I have done it rather with an eye to business, and that I am taking an unfair advantage in urging you to set on foot such a museum. At the same time, if these meetings are good for anything, we must try to make them practical. We ought to commemorate them in some way; and I hope the result of the Association's visit to Exeter will be that something will be done here to establish a museum, to arrange for the collecting of information, and to organise also a system for preserving the records of our old monuments by photographic and other means. Then we shall be able to say honestly that the visit has not been in vain. Our friends will go back to London, not finding us quite so uncivilised as in the centre of England we may possibly be supposed to be; and they will be encouraged to come here again, and to tell us how they can report of our progress since their last visit.

XI.

ON DISTANT CORRESPONDENTS.

A LECTURE

DELIVERED TO

THE EXETER LITERARY SOCIETY,

DECEMBER 15, 1871.

In 1870 Sir Stafford H. Northcote visited Canada. He was then Governor of the Hudson Bay Company, and was intrusted to negotiate the selling of the land, which had belonged to the Company, to the English Government. Sir Stafford was much struck by the increased and increasing facilities of communication between the Old and New Worlds. He had also been engaged in the negotiation of the Treaty of Washington, and had spent the earlier months of this year in the United States, and signed the now famous treaty in May 1871.

I MUST, as your president, apologise for having been so little with you this session—indeed I fear I may say not at all; but this has been a busy year with me, and it has not been in my power to be present—the power and not the will has been wanting. I have regretted, also, having had to change from the first

day fixed on for addressing you. It is always inconvenient to put off engagements, and I feel I may have been putting you to inconvenience in doing so; and I must own that within the last few days I have felt more seriously than before how inconvenient it might possibly have proved, for in the great and heavy anxiety which has been hanging over the country for the last week or two, one could not but feel that circumstances might have occurred which would have rendered it impossible for us with any satisfaction even to have held this meeting to-night. I trust that, under the providence of God, we are meeting, though under circumstances of deep national anxiety, yet not altogether without hope; and certain I am that wherever Englishmen are gathered together, and especially where Englishmen who take an interest in the promotion of the welfare of the people and of the education of the people are gathered together, there can be but one feeling of interest for any member of the Royal family, to whom we owe so much in the promotion of all the social good of this country. And those of you who have known anything of his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, know that he at all events has not been slow to follow in the footsteps of his revered and beloved father, and that he has taken an active and a prominent part in many undertakings for the promotion of science, literature, and art among the people; and turning again for a moment to the subject which I have announced for my lecture this even-

ing, I cannot help thinking that even in this particular subject, his Royal Highness may not unfitly be connected; for certainly England has never had an heir to the throne before who has seen so much of different countries, and has carried the name and the reputation of England to so many different and distant parts of the world as his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales. I have had occasion to follow his steps in the East, in Egypt, in the Far West, in Canada, and in the United States, and I can say that wherever the Prince has been known he has been esteemed.

I must not allow myself to be run away with by observations of this sort, but I feel I ought at once to proceed with the objects of my lecture. The title of it is "Distant Correspondents." Probably some of you may have divined that there is some connection between this title and the title of one of the charming 'Essays of Elia,' which, I hope, are familiar to most of those who claim to be members of a literary society. Perhaps the writings of Charles Lamb are not so much studied now as they were a few years ago, yet I trust there are but few Englishmen who take an interest in literature who do not occasionally turn over those pages. I have always looked on them as affording one of the best instances of the union of gentle humour, lively fancy, and domestic and touching pathos; and I think if I do you no other service to-night than that of recalling to your attention those writings, I confer

one for which you ought to thank me. The particular essay to which I allude is entitled "Distant Correspondents." It was written, I suppose, just about fifty years ago, and it appears to have been occasioned by one of Charles Lamb's friends being appointed a judge in the distant and then comparatively new colony of New South Wales, and the essay itself is in the form of a letter to a friend or correspondent in New South Wales :—

"My dear F.,—When I think how welcome the sight of a letter from the world where you were born must be to you in that strange one to which you have been transplanted, I feel some compunctious visitings at my long silence. But indeed it is no easy effort to set about a correspondence at our distance. The weary world of waters between us oppresses the imagination. It is difficult to conceive how a scrawl of mine should ever stretch across it. It is a sort of presumption to expect that one's thoughts should live so far. It is like writing for posterity, and reminds me of one of Mr Rowe's superscriptions, 'Alcander to Strephon in the Shades.' Cowley's Post-angel is no more than would be expedient in such an intercourse. . . . Epistolary matter usually compriseth three topics—news, sentiment, and puns. In the latter I include all non-serious subjects; or subjects serious in themselves, but treated after my fashion, non-seriously. And first, for news. In them the most desirable circumstance, I suppose, is that they shall be true. But what security can I have that what I now send you for truth shall not, before you get it, unaccountably turn into a lie? For instance, our mutual friend P. is at this present writing—*my Now*—in good health, and enjoys a fair share of worldly reputation. You are glad to hear it. This is natural and

friendly. But at this present reading—*your Now*—he may possibly be in the Bench, or going to be hanged, which in reason ought to abate something of your transport (*i.e.*, at hearing he was well, &c.), or at least considerably to modify it. I am going to the play this evening, to have a laugh with Munden. You have no theatre, I think you told me, in your land of d——d realities. You naturally lick your lips, and envy me my felicity. Think but a moment, and you will correct the hateful emotion. Why, it is Sunday morning with you, and 1823. . . . Ten months hence, your envy or your sympathy would be as useless as a passion spent upon the dead. . . . I cannot image to myself whereabout you are. When I try to fix it, Peter Wilkins's island comes across me. Sometimes you seem to be in the Hades of Thieves. I see Diogenes prying among you with his perpetual fruitless lantern. What must he be willing by this time to give for the sight of an honest man! You must almost have forgotten how *we* look. . . . My heart is as dry as that spring sometimes proves in a thirsty August, when I revert to the space that is between us; a length of passage enough to render obsolete the phrases of our English letters before they can reach you. But while I talk, I think you hear me,—thoughts dallying with vain surmise—

> 'Aye me! while thee the seas and sounding shores
> Hold far away.'

Come back, before I am grown into a very old man, so as you shall hardly know me. Come, before Bridget walks on crutches. Girls whom you left children have become sage matrons while you are tarrying there. . . . If you do not make haste to return, there will be little left to greet you, of me or mine."

This essay, as an old friend, was forcibly brought to mind in the course of the past spring, when I was not quite so far from England as Sydney, but still

some 3000 miles away, at Washington, and when, instead of finding our correspondence hanging fire in the way that Charles Lamb describes, it was even, I venture to say, too quick, for we actually received communications from England before they were despatched. You may wonder, perhaps, how that was, but of course I use the words—I beg pardon if I am touching on the theological style of language—in a non-natural sense. You are aware that the time in this country is not exactly the same as in others. You remember, perhaps, when, in Exeter, there was some fourteen minutes' difference between the time here and the time in London;[1] and across the ocean, when we found some five hours' difference in time from that of London, we became actually sensible of it. A despatch sent from England at five o'clock, if sent instantaneously, would reach Washington at twelve o'clock the same day. In the kind of business I and those with whom I was associated were doing, that was very important, for it frequently happened that we met our friends and colleagues, and discussed questions with them, the results of which we had to send home to England. We sent our work home for examination, it was discussed at a Cabinet meeting, say, on the Wednesday afternoon, and the answer was sent to us at Washing-

[1] In August 1852, Sir Stafford Northcote took a leading part in having the Exeter and Plymouth time made identical with that of Greenwich, opportunity being taken of the telegraph to Plymouth being completed.

ton the same evening, in time for us to take action on it. That is a very curious and remarkable contrast to the state of things so graphically described by Charles Lamb fifty years ago.

When one comes to consider correspondence, it is natural to ask what are the essentials of correspondence? Speaking roughly, they may be classified as follows,—the means of carrying it on, persons with whom to correspond, topics upon which to correspond, and some kind of community of sentiment or interest between them and those with whom they propose to correspond. It would take an evening of itself to call your attention to the enormous improvement that has taken place in the means of correspondence within the last fifty years, and I am more anxious to call your attention to the very great alteration in the class and field of your correspondents. I particularly have a desire to make you to some little extent acquainted with the position of those with whom you are in the habit of corresponding. Take, therefore, the three latter branches of my subject—the persons, the topics, and the community of sentiment and interest—as the main object of my lecture; and yet it is impossible in dealing with those three not to take cognisance of the first point, because there can be no doubt that the great improvement in the means of correspondence has a most material effect, I will not say on the number of correspondents, though possibly it may on even that, but certainly on the topics and

the community of sentiment. Correspondence which is rapid is easy; correspondence which is slow is difficult. I will therefore say a few words to you in the first instance on the improvements which have taken place in the means of correspondence in the last half-century.

The period at which we propose to start is not a bad one, for it was the dawn of many inventions which have since ripened into the means of improved correspondence. The first railway in England was opened in 1830; the first real ocean communication by steam was about the time of the accession of her Majesty to the throne, when the Sirius and the Great Western crossed the ocean; and the first patent for the electric telegraph was signed in the same year that her Majesty came to the throne; then we had the shortening and improving of the routes by which our correspondence is carried, and the greatest and most important of those improvements, the making use of the overland route to India, dated from about the same period. These have been two of the greatest causes of the acceleration of our distant correspondence—the introduction of new methods, and the making use of new routes. Another improvement connected with, consequent upon to a certain extent, and rendered possible by the others, was the improvement in the administration of the postal service, dating from the great reforms inaugurated by Rowland Hill. These have been the great improvements

that have naturally revolutionised our system of correspondence. Subsidiary to these there have been other smaller ones, yet not unimportant, such as, for instance, the great development of the newspaper press, and the medium of advertising. I may also refer to the pigeon-post, and the photographing of messages used during the siege of Paris. I believe the pigeon-post was an institution among the Arabs in 965.[1] We frequently see something which reminds us of our ancestors. We hear very much of the service of the post now organised; but looking back 150 or 180 years ago, we find that its functions were then rather peculiar. These were some of the things consigned to it in the days of Queen Anne: fifteen couple of hounds going to the King of the Romans with a free pass; two servant-maids going as laundresses to my Lord Ambassador Methuen; Dr Crichton carrying with him a cow and divers other necessaries; three suits of clothes for some nobleman's lady at the Court of Portugal; a box containing three pounds of tea sent as a present by my Lady Arlington to the Queen Dowager of England at Lisbon; a deal case with four flitches of bacon for Mr Sennington of Rotterdam. I was speaking just now of the introduction of steamers fifty years ago. In 1820, the number of steamers in the

[1] When Fatimites invaded Egypt (about 965), they established a regular service of pigeon-posts; some of these were still existing in 1450, both in Lower Egypt and in Syria, stations at from 25 to 80 or 100 miles apart. From Cairo to Alexandria, from Alexandria to Damietta, from Damietta to Gaza, from Gaza to Jerusalem, from Jerusalem to Damascus, &c.

United Kingdom was 34, and the tonnage 3019; now the number is 2240, and the tonnage 1,039,000.

Although I must pass by the correspondence between us and foreign nations generally, there are three, I was going to say two, which I must speak of rather specially. I mean China, Japan, and what I hesitate to call a foreign nation, the United States. In 1820, China was but little known, and Japan not known at all. Instead of the Chinese being now shut up within their own empire, the question is arising whether we can altogether tolerate the mode in which the Chinese are invading our countries, or countries in which we as Englishmen take an interest. Anxiety is expressed in many parts of the English-speaking world as to the large number of Chinese that are flocking over as workmen, and are beginning to influence in some places the character of the population. This is more particularly the case in parts of the United States, and even in Australia; and in some parts of the English dominions the influx of Chinese is a matter which has become one of serious consequences, and which, I believe, causes some anxiety, although perhaps unjustly. Perhaps the stories we hear as to the inconvenience of this Chinese immigration rather take their rise from a little jealousy on the part of Anglo-Saxon labourers at the intrusion of men who work very hard and for lower wages than themselves. But there are many who tell us that the Chinese ought to be welcomed with open arms, that

they ought to cause no anxiety, and that they are most valuable elements in the parts of the world in which they are spreading. The extension of our correspondence with our colonies is a matter of serious and great imperial interest. I must point out the wonderful increase of population in the colonies. In 1820 the population of the colonies was estimated at 3,810,000, whereas it is now estimated at 10,690,000. But I believe I shall be putting it at a low estimate if I say that the letters that pass have increased twelve hundred per cent. The population of the United States, from 1820 to 1870, has increased from 12,866,000 to probably about 40,000,000, or something more than two hundred per cent; but the British North American provinces have increased in the same time by about three hundred and seventy per cent.

When Charles Lamb wrote, Sydney and Van Diemen's Land were inhabited mostly by convicts; but now, in speaking of the great Australian colonies, we speak of a great empire, or many empires it may be, growing up on the other side of the world, and assuming a position which, in future ages, will be of the highest importance. In 1820 the population of New South Wales was 29,783, of whom 13,814 were convicts; but in 1869 the population of the continent of Australia was 1,510,000, and adding Tasmania and New Zealand, 1,847,000. The convict system broke down just as it was beginning to be put on a really good and promising footing. The throwing off of

restrictions with regard to trade had caused a great outburst of prosperity in the colonies. Although it interrupts my argument, I will give a few figures concerning the development of the shipping of the colonies. In 1820 the over-sea traffic from the United Kingdom, exclusive of the coasting trade, amounted to 4,000,000 tons, but in 1867 the trade to the British possessions amounted to 28,315,000 tons. To show the value of this, it is necessary to institute a comparison. And accordingly, in 1869, we find the amount of our trade to the United States to be 17½ millions, and to France 10½ millions. Thus the tonnage employed to the British possessions is larger than to the United States and France put together. These are remarkable figures, showing how glorious an empire we have inherited. I think we shall be a little careful how we talk of casting it away.

I have said that the discovery of gold had an especial effect upon the prosperity of the Australian colonies. In 1851 the excitement was first caused by the discovery. In 1853 her Majesty's Government, much against the grain, as far as the interests of this country were concerned, had to abandon the system of transportation. This discovery of gold did much good in taking numbers of the people to parts of the country to which they would not otherwise have been attracted, and so bringing into cultivation and development the resources of large tracts of territory which might have lain waste and useless for ages. Those

who have been in these colonies tell us that the buildings in Sydney, and more especially in Melbourne, are grand and magnificent—worthy to be compared with buildings in the great capitals of Europe. The whole character of the population is changed. They have their theatres and other amusements, like our own; they have their Derby, as interesting as the Derby run at Epsom. In these sports we mix ourselves with them; our cricketers go over there, and international matches are played.

I must pass over various of the colonies—the West Indies, and the great effect that the abolition of slavery has had upon them; over our South African and West African possessions. I want to say a few words to you concerning our North American possessions. I wish you to understand what the actual possession of this great dominion of Canada actually is. Many persons think that it is a great tract of forest, and snow, and lakes, with some fishery; that it is a territory which the United States covet, and which we cannot defend; which is always wanting us to guarantee their laws or to lend them money; and that it will one day prove a trap for our soldiers, and the sooner we are rid of it the better. This is not the condition of Canada: it is as interesting a British dominion as it is possible to conceive. A large proportion of the population consists of the descendants of the old French settlers. Lower Canada was acquired, not by colonisation, but by conquest, after it had been

colonised by France. We are told that they are more French than the inhabitants of France itself. They retain among themselves many old habits, characteristics, and laws, which prevailed in France before the great French Revolution. If you want to see old France, you must not look for it in Burgundy or Brittany, but in Quebec; and bear in mind the peculiar circumstance of its close contiguity to the United States, with which it has many points of resemblance.

We are often told, sometimes with one animus and sometimes with another, that any jealousy or any quarrel between England and the United States must necessarily affect the wellbeing and safety of our Canadian possessions; while, according to the theory which has taken hold of other people and rides them like a nightmare, the very fact of our having possessions it is presumed the United States covet is in itself a source of danger to the interests and friendship between the United States and England. I hold that to be fallacious; but there is no doubt that the contact between Canada and America gives a very peculiar interest to that particular dominion, with which it is well that you should be acquainted. Not many years ago they were a few disconnected provinces lying all along the frontier; now they have bound themselves into a confederation spreading from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and including the large territory of Hudson Bay, capable of producing corn and

grass, and anything suitable for the service of man. I will pass for a time to the great Republic of the United States: few of those who talk loudly about the matter are acquainted with the subject.

The report here summarises as follows: "The lecturer then referred to the Constitution of the States, and alluding to the Democratic organisation, explained the main distinction between them, and stated that although the great question of slavery had been settled, there continued to arise among them many matters which lean to one side or the other, and made it very difficult to maintain the perfect rights of local self-government and the perfect unity of the whole Republic; he referred to the Klu klux clan, and showed its origin, adding some remarks on the 'carpet-baggers,' and other classes comprised in the Legislatures of the States."

It has been asserted that the Klu klux was more of a frolic than a serious matter, consisting of young men who used to dress up as hobgoblins, and practise on the fears of the negroes and try to drive them from the polling-booth; for even in that blessed country, where they had the ballot, there was such a thing as intimidation. At all events, these young men used to exercise serious intimidation on the negroes. The Klu klux has become a real danger in some of the Southern States, in one of which, we are told, there are forty thousand of them well armed and prepared to go a considerable length. With regard to

the Western States, many persons wondered, at the time of the Civil War, why they sided so actively with one party. Their object was to keep the Mississippi as an outlet; on the other hand, they were equally anxious to have an outlet by the way of the St Lawrence. It would be perfectly possible for the United States to make a system of canals which would enable them to get an outlet to the ocean without going through the Canadian waters. It would be much more profitable to both parties that the Canadian canals should be enlarged, and in order to enable them to enlarge them, they should tempt into them the commerce of the United States. It is important for both parties that that communication be made and thrown open to both parties. There is another great amalgamation that should take place —namely, an amalgamation of the railways. The railway that has been opened across the continent of America is not all that can be desired, neither do people believe that the present Pacific line affords the best means of communication across the continent. Another line is now in the course of formation, running, or intended to run, pretty close to our boundary. It begins through a very flourishing country, but runs in the far West through the great American desert. There is a very much better line to be established to the westward, through British territory—through a territory of which I have spoken as being that given up to the silver-fox and the marten. That country

is now being brought into the Canadian dominion. It is a rich country, capable of growing wheat and barley, and various other grains and vegetables. The climate also is very suitable, and as attention is now being directed to that country, I have no doubt that if what I have mentioned takes place, there will be an enormous development in that part of our dominions. Some of you may have heard about one question to be settled at Washington concerning the island of San Juan, which is of very little value itself, but which is, with regard to boundary, one of excessive importance. From time to time questions have arisen as to the boundary between the United States and the British possessions, and the matter has been referred to the arbitration of the Emperor of Germany. I refer to this now because it is very important that we should have a good outlet to the Pacific Ocean from the Canadian dominions. If this can be procured, I believe the prospects of the Canadian dominions are great and assured.

I must draw to a conclusion, but before I do so I wish to make one or two observations on the general question of the improvement in our correspondence, and the changes in the character of our correspondents. I have shown what an enormous development there has been in the means of correspondence, and I have drawn your attention to the great increase in the class of your correspondents.

Perhaps you will not be without the means of

following up for yourselves the question as to the numerous topics on which you may correspond with interest to yourselves—matters wherein you are more closely drawn together by domestic and family ties. I believe that there are many people who visit distant countries, and have friends abroad, and subjects of a private character to correspond upon. I have no doubt that the development of trade raises a large number of subjects connected with the interests of various communities, which bring them into closer relations. There is no question that on the lighter topics, the national sports, &c., we have subjects in common, and there are, no doubt, also questions of social interest. The English workman corresponds with the workman in America and elsewhere; communications keep going on between those interested in philanthropy, international exhibitions, &c.; in fact, scores of different subjects may be mentioned in which we are brought into communication one with another. I wish to call attention to the increase of sentiment on topics which ought to interest us all. I believe myself that nothing is more important for the interests of the British Empire, than the cultivation of good will, good feeling, and good understanding between British subjects all over the world. I think it is greatly to be desired for the strengthening of this great empire, that we should endeavour to make ourselves acquainted with the wants, wishes, and interests of our colonial fellow-subjects. I desire,

as far as possible, to keep clear of political topics, and therefore abstain from saying much that I could say upon that point. I hope that you will not think that I am going too far in saying this, that I believe that if the empire is to be kept together, it can only be kept together in a monarchy. Of course it is a question that every one must consider for himself—whether it is worth while keeping the British Empire together, or whether an insular independence may not be more conducive to our wellbeing and happiness. That is a point on which I do not now desire to argue with any one who may differ from me, but certain I am, that if you convert this British Empire into a republic, it could only be an insular republic. Certain I am, that whatever knits your Canadian, Australian, African, and Indian fellow-subjects in your empire, is the tie—the personal tie—of the monarchy. Certain I am, too, that in your communication with our own descended neighbours over the water, the fact of our monarchy is a very great recommendation of England to the Americans. I have always observed that, though the Americans cling to their own institutions, the great mass of them, however they may occasionally indulge in a little laugh or gibe at some of our peculiarities, do respect and do appreciate the character of our sovereign, and the institution of our monarchy. For the maintenance of the British Empire as it is, the monarchy is indispensable. I will say this, that with regard to the maintenance of the

British Empire, instead of holding that the great extent of our empire is a source of danger to us, and therefore a cause of danger to peace, I believe myself that if we act wisely, and if we are able to maintain proper relations with our colonies abroad, the maintenance of the British Empire as it is ought to be a great guarantee for peace,—for the very fact of our being so exposed at so many points, of our being obliged, therefore, to be careful in our dealings, feeling as we do that any breach of the peace must fall heavily upon a great commercial nation, having so many connections as ourselves, gives us an interest in the maintenance of peace, which is superior to any of a merely sentimental or philanthropic character. And at the same time, our extensions throughout the world, touching as we do upon so many points, and therefore being in a position in which we may so easily provoke breaches of the peace here, there, and everywhere, renders it excessively important that there should be a strong controlling central power, which should prevent different members of the British family from breaking the peace as they well might do. It is not only the preventing of the breaking of the peace with European and other civilised nations, but possibly with semi-civilised or barbarous nations, with which our colonies may be apt to interfere. That is a danger which you have to guard against, and I am fully persuaded that it is for the interest and peace of the whole world that we should as far as possible

keep together the British Empire, bound together by those ties of correspondence which we possess. And further, let me say,—I have been speaking of communication with our colonies,—let me say a word with regard to the effect which the improved means of correspondence has on our communication with one of the nations. I have heard it said that if the electric telegraph had been in operation at the time of the dispute which is known by the name of the Trent affair, when two envoys of the Confederate States were taken out of a British vessel by an American vessel, the rapidity of the messages conveyed in an excited state of feeling would have prevented a calm consideration and that gradual smoothing down of irritation which averted the great calamity of a war. I don't know how that might have been,—I rather doubt with regard to it,—but I am certain that the formation of correspondence between different nations ought to have, and I believe will have, the effect of making them understand each other better, and therefore be less liable to go to war with each other. And although hasty words may be spoken in anger, which on reflection will calm down, yet, on the other hand, if we understand one another better, those hasty words will not be spoken at all. I think small matters tend to the promotion of good feeling between countries. What is it that sometimes provokes the United States against us? It is not great wrongs that are done. It is hasty language

that is used. It is a sneer in which we sometimes indulge with regard to something we do not perfectly appreciate. It is because one nation does not think the other is paying sufficient regard to it. It is because one does not sympathise in the feelings and misfortunes of the other. What made the Americans so angry with us at the time of the great civil struggle was, that they thought that we showed a want of sympathy with the great misfortune in which they were undoubtedly plunged; they felt that when we saw the flower of their country in the most painful of sufferings we looked coldly upon it, and that was more than they could bear. Improved communication brings us together, and ought to, and will have the effect of making us understand each other, and love each other better. I rejoice excessively that before the Chicago fire was put out, while the hearts of men were still wrung with anxiety and distress, they were enabled to receive a telegram from England to say that already meetings had been held, sympathy had been expressed, and funds were being raised,—that England was going as fast as she could to the help of the sufferers in that dreadful calamity. I say, that if we want to see what the response of America to that message through the electric cable has been, we may find it in to-day's 'Times,' in which we learn that prayers were offered up last Sunday in the churches of New York for the recovery of his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales.

XII.

ON MOLIÈRE.

A LECTURE

DELIVERED TO

THE EXETER LITERARY SOCIETY,

OCTOBER 2, 1872.

Sir Stafford H. Northcote often found amusement and interest in his leisure evenings by reading aloud. His choice usually fell upon plays, and with both English and French authors he was equally familiar. At the end of the session of 1872 we find an allusion in a letter from Sir Stafford to Lady Northcote with regard to his proposed lecture:—

"1*st August* 1872.

"I mean to spend the whole of to-night in the House of Commons, and if I find there is any important reason for my staying to-morrow I will do so, and come on Saturday morning, but I should much like to come to-morrow if I can manage it. I am going out to finish my commissions, &c., and call on Lord Devon, with whom I have to make various arrangements about our Tiverton inquiry. One of my reasons for wanting to come down to-morrow is, that I wish to meet him and Hughes in Exeter on Saturday. If I can manage matters so, I may be able to meet Monsieur Gavard myself and bring him out. I wonder whether

we can get any Molière out of him. O—— and I had a grand argument last night on the subject of Molière *versus* Shakespeare. He showed a good deal both of knowledge and cleverness."

I CANNOT help feeling a sort of sense of the incongruity in appearing before you this evening in the double character of president and lecturer, two offices which ought perhaps not to be confused together. But perhaps I might draw some comfort to myself in occupying the double character from a situation which occurs in one of the plays of the author of whom I am going to speak to you, in which a miser having occasion to speak to his servant, who held the double office of coachman and cook, the servant asked, "Are you going to speak to me in the character of coachman, for if so I will put on my coat—or in the character of cook, for in that case I must put on my apron?" I assure you I feel very proud of the position you have been good enough to assign me, that of President, but on the present occasion I must strip off, metaphorically, the dress of President, whatever it might be, and put on the proper dress of Lecturer.

It would be impossible for me in the course of an evening's lecture to do justice to so great a subject as that which I have chosen. While reading Molière over and over again with a view to my lecture, it seemed to me that it would require a series of lectures to represent the various phases of Molière's character, and the different points which arose out of his plays.

This, at all events, struck me, that I might regard such a subject from two points of view—either I might direct your attention to the character and genius of the author himself, or I might call upon you to consider the illustrations which his works afford of the state of the society in which he lived, and the manners of the people of whom he wrote. Both these are interesting and important subjects for consideration.

Comedy has been described as the *bienséance* of society, a rather difficult phrase to render into English, but which I would venture to translate as the "proprieties" of society. If the comic writer perform valuable services in putting down by ridicule those follies which the severity of the law cannot touch; and if it is true, as I believe it to be, that of all the comic writers that have ever written since the beginning of civilised times, Molière may be ranked as one of the first three (and I should call the other two Aristophanes and Shakespeare), it cannot be otherwise than interesting to study carefully the circumstances under which Molière wrote, the character of the man, the character of his writings, and compare him with those who preceded and followed him. On the one hand, if you bear in mind that the period at which he wrote was one of the most important and critical periods in the whole history of France—I mean the age of Louis Quatorze—and when you remember that his works illustrate the state of society at that time,

it is worth while for those wishing to study the history, and understand the character, of the French, to attentively peruse Molière's works.

De Tocqueville showed it was in the age of Louis Quatorze that began that state of society which culminated in the French Revolution, coming, as it did, after the great French Civil War, introducing a period when the people were pretty well exhausted and had given way to a spirit of intrigue, when the nobles had begun to lose their great position, to quit their country residences, and be attracted to Paris by the Court, so preparing the way for that great breaking up of society which took place fifty years afterwards, when at the same time society and literature were culminating and bursting into a brilliance which had given to the age the name of the Augustan age of French literature, and when there was a great development of intellectual and literary power in France. And Voltairè remarks: "La plupart des grands seigneurs de la cour de Louis Quatorze voulaient imiter cet air de grandeur, d'éclat, et de dignité qu'avait leur maître. Ceux d'un ordre inférieur copiaient la hauteur des premiers, et il y en avait enfin, et même en grand nombre, qui poussaient cet air avantageux, et cette envie dominante de se faire valoir jusqu'au plus grand ridicule. Ce défaut dura longtemps. Molière l'attaqua souvent, et il contribua à défaire le public de ces importans subalternes, ainsi que de l'affectation des précieuses, du pédantisme des femmes savantes,

de la robe et du latin des médecins. Molière fut, si on ose le dire, un législateur des bienséances du monde."

As I said just now, we might very well study Molière's character and writings and times in each of those aspects, but I cannot undertake to do it effectively and properly in a single lecture. I do not like to choose one at the expense of the other, and therefore what I propose to do is to make a sort of irregular and desultory commentary upon the great lines of Molière's life, following the man as far as possible, and making any little digressions which may be tempting.

Molière was born about 1620, and was the son of a man of humble position, a broker in Paris. Molière was intended to be brought up in the same way. About this time began the revival of the French stage by Corneille and Racine. Molière was tempted to leave his business, and after getting some education at the College of Jesuits, he joined the comedians. He became the leader of a troupe, or company of comedians, who performed in the provinces, and after a short time he took himself to writing plays for them to perform. At that time the comic stage was nearly extinct. In the great days of Greece there had been a comic drama of the most marvellous power and splendour. Aristophanes was the greatest comic writer whose works had come down to them. No doubt he was the leading comedian of Athens.

Aristophanes was a writer of a very different kind from Molière. His works bore, of course, the stamp and the character of the day, and as the feeling at Athens was intensely political, so the works of Aristophanes were intensely political. But later in the history of Greece a different kind of comedy sprang up, more of a domestic character. That comedy, although the works of the principal writers were lost, we know gave the tone to the comedy of Rome, to the works of Terence, Plautus, and others. From those authors the Italians took up the drama, and their own works were written very much after the fashion of Terence and Plautus.

Molière, when he wrote, followed the Italian models. His first play, 'L'Étourdi,' or the Blunderer, was little more than an adaptation of an Italian play, though ingeniously and well written, — the story being that of a giddy youth, who was, by his father's wish, engaged to marry the daughter of a family friend, and is in love with a beautiful stranger. The situation is farther complicated by the fact that his betrothed has given her affections elsewhere, in fact to the rival of L'Étourdi in the beautiful stranger's affections. Mascarille, the accomplished valet, companion, and confidant of L'Étourdi, and who, by his wit, ingenuity, liveliness, and roguery, may be called the true descendant of the valet of Italian farce and ancient comedy, devises many clever and unscrupulous schemes whereby to outwit the old people and

render prosperous the love-affairs of his master. L'Étourdi contrives, just as each successive plan for the happy issue of his love-affair is about to be crowned with success, to traverse by officious blundering the well-laid plot. In the variety, ingenuity, fun, and boldness of the valet's resources lies the chief merit and charm of this merry play. In 'Les Fourberies de Scapin,' published eighteen years later, we find something of the same idea treated with almost unrivalled comic power and effect. For one expression which has become proverbial in more than one language, Molière was indebted to the celebrated Mademoiselle Lécouvreur, whose lover, the Count de Saxe, ruined himself in the invention and completion of a galley, which was to perform the voyage on the Seine from Rouen to Paris in twenty-four hours, by means of mechanism, and without sails or oars, and which, proving a total failure, his mistress dismissed the subject with the remark, "Qu'allait il faire dans cette galère?"

If we compare French and English comedies of the same period, we find in the French far less grossness in the scenes depicted and in the language used; but there is plenty of evidence in the plays of Molière of the existence of the same lax morality in French as in English society. The French followed the classical school and observed what were called the unities. A French play, when represented, supplied what actually took place at one time, and within a

certain limited period, and the players were supposed to be in the street or in a room. All that took place must occur within the three or four hours allowed for representation. In English plays we know that rule was not observed, and that there are some plays, such as Shakespeare's, extending not only over many days, but even many years. It was quite obvious that the French stage was very disadvantageous to a writer representing character. It was quite impossible fully to represent the mixed characters seen in men if they had to be represented all together in the same place and at the same time. Supposing Shakespeare, in drawing the character of Prince Henry the Fifth, had been limited to a short period, and a single place, such as the palace of Westminster, or the tavern at East Chepe, it would have been almost or quite impossible for him to have represented the changes and development of the character of the Prince, whom at one time we find drinking with his associates in the tavern, at another fighting boldly in the field of Shrewsbury, and at another touchingly attending his father on his deathbed.

These are difficulties with which the writer who strictly observed the unities had to contend, and it may be partly owing to them that it has been said that the characters of Molière are not sufficiently distinct and lifelike, and are in this respect inferior to the characters of the greatest writers of the English stage. Molière represented abstractions rather than

individuals. But it is incorrect to assert that even Molière's minor characters were too much the same. With regard to the structure of his plots, indeed, this accusation was partially justified, as they frequently turned upon the idea of the roguish servant or impertinent waiting-maid outwitting their social superiors and making roguery triumphant. "Facies non omnibus una nec diversa tamen." The characters themselves will bear comparison with Shakespeare clowns or Sancho Panza.

Although Molière began by copying the Italian writers, he very soon struck out a path for himself. About the time he produced his third or fourth play Molière commenced a very interesting period of his life. This play was entitled 'Les Précieuses Ridicules,'[1] and was a satire on the class of society, the chief of whom used to meet at the Hôtel Rambouillet. On these meetings Voltaire passed this comment:—

"La fureur du bel esprit était plus que jamais à la mode. Voiture avait été le premier en France qui avait écrit avec cette galanterie ingénieuse dans laquelle il est si difficile d'éviter la fadeur et l'affectation. . . . Les romans de Madlle. Scuderi avaient achevé de gâter le goût; il régnait dans la plupart des conversations un mélange de galanterie guindée, de sentiments romanesques, et d'expressions bizarres, qui composaient un jargon, nouveau, inintelligible, et admiré. Les provinces, qui outrent toutes les modes, avaient encore

[1] *Précieuse* is a word that may be said to correspond to our blue-stocking, and, though having a noble derivation from the Latin *pretiosus*, or valuable, to have by misuse come to mean pedantry and affectation of superiority.

renchéri sur le ridicule: les femmes qui se figuraient de cet espèce de bel esprit s'appelaient précieuses."

Belonging to this society were Ménage and Vangelas, and it is to their efforts that France is principally indebted for the founding of the great French Academy. They performed an immense service in making the French language the beautiful language it is now, superior in preciseness, neatness, and elegance to any modern language. If we wish to study our own English language, we could not do better than make French the medium of studying it. "Les Précieuses," however, carried their love of language to a ridiculous extent, and Molière wrote his play to put down the absurdity.

His next play was 'L'École des Femmes,' an attack on the ladies, for which Molière was severely attacked in return. He defended himself in 'La Critique de l'École des Femmes,' and in 'L'Impromptu de Versailles,' both clever pieces. 'Tartuffe,' the Hypocrite, was one of his greatest works, and I will venture to refer to it at full length.

I suppose that it would commonly be said that in this play it was Molière's intention to ridicule religious hypocrisy. I am not sure that this would be a correct view. He does not make Tartuffe himself ridiculous; he makes him simply detestable. The character who is made ridiculous is Orgon, who is not a hypocrite, but a weak, credulous man, taken in by an impostor. It may, of course, have been the case that Molière had

in his eye some particular person or persons whom he satirised under the name of Tartuffe, and who were really hypocrites; but he does not make them feel themselves ridiculous—he points them out as odious. As for Tartuffe himself, we are distinctly told that he was a well-known villain who had changed his name for the sake of committing further villanies. He was an impostor; but he does not fulfil my notion of a hypocrite. I believe that a real hypocrite commonly deceives himself to some extent — not altogether, of course. The hypocrites denounced in Scripture certainly did. A hypocrite is literally one who acts a part; and our religious hypocrites generally persuade themselves that they are doing themselves good in the sight of God as well as among men by acting the part of saints. Sometimes they have begun in sincerity, and slid down more or less into hypocrisy. Oliver Cromwell may be quoted as an instance. So, in fiction, may Balfour of Burley. Joseph Surface, again, who, though not making pretensions to religion, is a moral hypocrite, has some notion that he is really more moral than his brother Charles.

Ben Jonson, in his wonderful play of the 'Alchemist,' gives us most perfect specimens of ridiculous hypocrisy in his two Puritans, who are ready to go through almost any amount of moral turpitude in order to forward what they consider the cause of religion, and whose alternations between straining at gnats and swallowing camels are most graphically described.

There is nothing of all this about Tartuffe. He is a clever impostor, making the most of a credulous fool, and he is as little to be called a hypocrite as is Subtle the Alchemist when he assumes the religious character in his interviews with Sir Epicure Mammon.

It would be most unjust, then, to charge Molière with having made religion ridiculous in his handling of the character of Tartuffe. Ben Jonson is more nearly within the range of such a criticism, though he does not seem to me to have gone beyond the bounds which comedy allows. But Molière is studiously careful not only to make it clear that Tartuffe himself is a villain in disguise, but to supply an antidote to any mischief which the cause of religion might suffer from his villany, by introducing the character of Cléante into the piece. Cléante is good in himself, and he is made the vehicle of some of the noblest sentiments with regard to true religion that are to be found in any dramatic writer. In his first scene with Orgon, not content with ruthlessly exposing the hypocrisy of devotees like Tartuffe, he proceeds to sketch the character of the truly virtuous man, and it would be difficult to find anywhere a nobler portrait clothed in more noble poetry.

As the plot develops, and when Cléante is brought into contact with Tartuffe, at the height of his success, his reproofs are so dignified, so temperate, and so unanswerable, that the impostor is reduced to the necessity of suddenly pulling out his watch and plead-

ing an engagement, which compels him to retire hastily. When Orgon discovers the villany of Tartuffe and rages not only against him, but against all *gens de bien*, Cléante interposes with some words of moderation, warns him against confounding the truly good with the impostors, and ends by telling him that to turn against the zeal because he had been taken in by a false zealot, would be the worse fault of the two. When Tartuffe comes in, accompanied by the officers of the law, to execute his schemes of vengeance against Orgon, Cléante so thoroughly strips his wicked conduct of all disguise, that Tartuffe, clever as he is at answering everybody else, is reduced to silence, and is obliged to call on the officers to put a stop to the scene by carrying off Orgon to prison. Finally, when vengeance overtakes Tartuffe himself, and Orgon, his dupe, relieved from his fears, is beginning to give vent to his indignation, Cléante, who has been the consistent opponent of Tartuffe all through the piece, interferes to prevent his brother-in-law from heaping indignities on a fallen man, however unworthy, and suggests that he should more charitably hope that the sinner may learn repentance from the evil of his life.

Cléante, sensible, firm, moderate, and truly religious, is most happily contrasted with Orgon, the weakest and most credulous of men, apparently without much principle himself, and ready to be carried away by the most transparent impostures. Tartuffe's own character is simple enough: he is a very bad, a very audacious,

and a very clever man, who has got hold of a rich fool with a handsome wife, and who is bent upon getting the whole of the possessions of the husband, and, if possible, the love of the wife. In the latter part of the scheme he fails; but in the former he thoroughly succeeds. He makes Orgon disinherit his son and make a donation of all his goods to himself; and then availing himself of information which he has wheedled out of his victim, he gets him sentenced to imprisonment, and would find himself master of all his possessions, if it were not for a rather clumsy contrivance, by which the king is made himself to detect the villany, and to interpose to prevent and punish it.

It can hardly be said, then, that Tartuffe's own character is a difficult one. The character of Orgon is much more so. He is a man who appears to have had naturally some good impulses. We are told that in some civil troubles which had recently taken place he had behaved loyally and gallantly, and had merited the favour of the king. We find that he had made exertions to save a friend who belonged to the opposite party, and had taken charge of some papers of importance in order to do so. He is in a position of independence, is happy in his family, wealthy, well-considered. But he falls under the influence of Tartuffe, and we almost say that he ceases to be a man. He cares for neither wife, son, nor daughter; Tartuffe is everything to him. He cannot express what he feels for him. "C'est un homme qui, ah! un homme,

un homme enfin." Dorine, the keen-witted serving-maid, who sees through both Tartuffe and her master, brings into the highest relief all the absurdities of the situation. The description she gives to Cléante of the way in which Orgon behaves towards his idol, is well followed up by the inimitable scene in which she contrasts the sufferings of her mistress with the comfortable enjoyments of Tartuffe, eliciting from her master no word of sympathy for his wife's fever, and headache, and sleeplessness, and inability to touch food, while he keeps on inquiring anxiously after Tartuffe, and cries, "Le pauvre homme," after every answer, though every answer is to the effect that he ate heartily, drank merrily, slept soundly, and looked the picture of health. But all this is nothing to the scenes which follow, and which show us Orgon disbelieving the testimony of his own son, confirmed though it is by the admissions of his wife, as to the base proposals made by Tartuffe to the latter; quarrelling with him, turning him out of doors, disinheriting him, and making a donation of everything he has to the impostor.

His infatuation reminds one of nothing so much as of that of Titania for Bottom when her eyes have been anointed with Oberon's mystic plant juice. We ask, then, in wonder, with what juice had the eyes of Orgon been smeared, that we may account for this blindness? According to his own account, he had been first captivated by the fervour of Tartuffe's public devotions,

carefully arranged as we see to attract his attention; then by his apparent unselfishness and charity in giving ostentatiously to the poor half of what Orgon bestowed upon him; then by his genius for finding a sin in everything, and by the remarkable susceptibility of his conscience in reproaching himself for putting too much anger into the killing of a nasty little insect which had annoyed him. The result is, that when Damis accuses Tartuffe to his father of the blackest villany, Tartuffe is so certain of his power over Orgon's mind that he meets the charge audaciously, by acknowledging himself in general terms to be the greatest of sinners, of whom nothing too bad can be said, and praying Orgon to believe his son, and to turn himself out of the house. Orgon, of course, refuses to believe that his saint can have been guilty; he takes his humble self-accusation for another proof of the extreme tenderness of his conscience; and in rejecting the charge, he is naturally led to impute its having been made to the malignity of his son. It is a master-stroke of Tartuffe's, for the matter is one which he could not have explained away; while, had he met the accusation with a denial, Damis would have produced his proofs. The act of Tartuffe consists in making Orgon take up his defence instead of attempting to defend himself; and we are left in doubt whether most to admire the ingenuity and audacity of the villain, or the fatuous folly of the dupe.

There are other characters in this remarkable play which are well worthy of study, and it has been well observed that the manner in which they are grouped brings out each character more forcibly. The little sketch of Madame Pernelle, Orgon's mother, is excellent, and is probably not overdrawn. Elmire, the wife, is a model of prudence, and one sees in her the family likeness to her brother Cléante. She is perhaps a trifle too prudent on one or two occasions, when she might as well have spoken out more plainly. Damis, the hot-headed young son, is a good character; and the daughter, Mariane, is a capital specimen of a missy young lady. The scene between her and her lover, Valère, when the question of her marrying Tartuffe is under consideration, is one of the most amusing that Molière ever wrote. But of all the subordinate characters, Dorine, the maid, is the best.

Molière makes great use of the *suivantes* in many of his plays. She is always ready to act as a foil to his principal characters, to bring out their absurdities, and often to furnish the best correctives of them. Dorine, I think, stands at the head of her class. She has all the ready wit and the keen sense of the ludicrous which distinguish the *suivantes* in other plays; but she has, withal, something of a higher tone than most of them, and one looks upon her as almost the good angel of the piece, opposed to the fiendish Tartuffe. Valère and Mariane would have quarrelled outright, and Mariane would have accepted

Tartuffe, but for Dorine's good sense and good humour. If sense and good humour could have made impression upon Orgon, Dorine would have saved him too; and I cannot but feel that she has a little justification, when, after his eyes have been opened, and he is venting his anger in no measured terms on the treacherous Tartuffe, she quietly reminds him of his past infatuation by interposing his own phrase, "*Le pauvre homme,*" in the midst of his wrath. It is, however, impossible for us rightly to appreciate the 'Tartuffe,' without taking into view the history of its early days.

Molière produced, in the first instance, the first three acts only, terminating with the scene in which Orgon turns his son out of doors, and makes a donation of all his goods to the impostor. It was acted before the king, and again before Monsieur; but though applauded by these royal personages, so loud an outcry was raised against it by persons of influence at Court, that its public representation was for a very long time forbidden. After about three years of contention, the play was allowed to be placed on the stage under a different name, and with many corrections. Then, even this modified representation was arrested, and two more years elapsed before all restrictions were taken off. Not only men whose very demonstrative piety might have been suspected of a rather too close affinity with the vice of hypocrisy, but some most excellent and eminent men, such as

Bossuet and Bourdaloue, joined in denouncing the comedy as an offence against religion. Molière defended it energetically; and his preface, his *placets* to the king, and an anonymous letter which bears marks of his hand, are full of close arguments against the criticisms of his opponents. His defence, so far as the intent and object of the piece are concerned, appears perfect.

It may, however, be a question whether the introduction of religious language, and the representation of a *quasi* religious character upon the stage, was wholly free from objection. Granted that Tartuffe is so undisguised a villain in every eye but Orgon's, that no one among the spectators could fail to see the real moral of the story, still he is made to speak like a saint, and to use language which in itself ought to command our respect, in such a manner as to taint it with the odour of his own hypocrisy. It might very well be, that good men thought that such an exhibition would not be edifying to the thoughtless spectators, and that it was treating religion with a dangerous familiarity which ought to be checked. It must be remembered, also, that the censures were directed against the piece when it terminated with the third act, when it therefore left the hypocrite triumphant, and before the extent of his villany was exposed, as it is in the two concluding acts. It would have been well, however, if some of the indignation directed against 'Tartuffe' had been diverted

to the more really objectionable plays, such as 'George Dandin.'

The next work was 'Les Femmes Savantes,' a satire on the over-learned ladies of the day, broadly making fun of their affectation, and also of the pretensions of two of the *habitués* of the Hôtel Rambouillet, Ménage and the Abbé Cotin. The scene where the silly sonnet and madrigal are introduced was exactly copied, as were the poems, from a similar scene that had taken place in the presence of Mademoiselle a short time previous. Ménage refused to recognise himself as the critic Vadius; but, with less tact, the Abbé Cotin, author of the poems, accepted the part of Tricotin or Trissotin, and attacked Molière as disloyal and impious. These accusations were little heeded by the public, who first laughed at and then neglected their author, and the former idol of learned drawing-room coteries. Poor Abbé Cotin, when he died ten years later, found, though a member of the French Academy, no better elegy than

> "Savez-vous en quoi Cotin
> Différe de Trissotin?
> Cotin a fini ses jours,
> Trissotin vivra toujours."

Among the best and most interesting of Molière's plays is the 'Misanthrope.' Though the piece itself contains but little action, yet it shows great discrimination of character—not only of character in the abstract, but also of living men and women; and

indeed it seems certain that the principal personages in this play are intended to be satires on some of the great nobles of Moliére's time, just as it is evident that Pope satirised some of the leaders of fashion in his day in his essays on Man and on Women.

I have not time to refer at length to all Molière's plays, but it may be worth while to note that many of them were written to lash the follies and some the greater vices of his time.

Among the former I may mention—'Les Précieuses Ridicules,' 'Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme,' 'La Comtesse d'Escarbagnas,' 'L'Amour Médecin,' 'Les Femmes Savantes,' 'Le Médecin malgré lui,' 'Le Malade Imaginaire,' 'L'École des Femmes,' 'L'École des Maris'; while among the latter, which attack the greater vices, I should class — 'L'Avare,' 'Le Misanthrope,' 'Le Festin de Pierre,' 'Tartuffe'; while others, such as 'L'Étourdi,' 'Les Fâcheux,' 'Monsieur de Pourceaugnac,' 'Le Dépit Amoureux,' 'Amphitryon,' 'Les Fourberies de Scapin'—seem to have been written chiefly to make fun.

Molière's was a life of hard struggle and contest, and he was engaged on what Mr Carlyle would call demolishing shams. And remember, the great comedian who was doing this among persons of the highest class, persons most eminent in the world, and persons of great power, was but a little broker's son, who had raised himself entirely by his own efforts, pursuing a profession which was looked upon with contempt even

by his audiences, who, although they were willing to be entertained by the plays, were disposed to treat with contempt the author as well as the actors,—there was this man of few advantages, by the force of his genius, maintaining himself in the face of all the great influences of the prejudice and folly of society which were arrayed against him. True, he had the support of the King, the Court, and of the first princes of the blood; but I suppose his principal support came from his own determination not to be put down.

I said that I would speak of Molière not only with reference to his own character and as to the mode in which he worked, but also with regard to the illustrations his works afforded of the characteristics of the age; and though it is impossible to go through anything like a catalogue of his plays, yet the one or two I have spoken of are clever pictures of the state of society at the time when Molière lived.

Throughout the plays of Molière we see very prominently brought forward the boundary-line which divided the *bourgeoisie* from the nobles, and which was much more strongly marked at that time in France than in England.

It was partly in consequence of this great distinction between the classes, that when the Revolution broke out, French society was powerless to resist it. People found themselves, as it were, split up into different level planes, which had no lines of intersection. The *bourgeoisie* at that time were no longer

men of inferior worldly position to the nobles; they were men of equally good education; and yet the distinction of caste was so strong that there was no feeling of cordiality between the classes. This was most strikingly exemplified by the feeling that existed with regard to marriage. Nothing more odious to the French than the idea of a marriage between a noble and a *bourgeoise* could possibly be conceived; and there was a very striking illustration of this in one of Molière's plays.[1]

In this respect English society differed materially from the French, as Molière's contemporary authors in England prove; for in this country there was no real incongruity in a marriage between members of different classes, and there we have one of the secrets of the strength of the English aristocracy as contrasted with that of the French. The French aristocracy kept itself apart and gradually grew weaker, while the *bourgeoisie* were rising and gaining strength. On the other hand, the English aristocracy always mixed freely with those who rose from the middle rank, and a current was continually passing from one to the other. The English aristocracy had never been exclusive, like the aristocracy of France, and as a consequence it had maintained itself in a far different way from that of the French.

I feel that in this one limited effort it is impossible for me to do justice to such a writer as Molière. He

[1] George Dandin.

is one who, like Shakespeare, is abundantly quoted from; but his writings would well repay a very close attention, and would give us not only many an hour of pleasure, but an immense amount of profitable information.

Indeed I may urge, from every point of view, the study not only of Molière's writings, but those of the other standard classical French authors. The study of French is an introduction to our own language, and by no better means can we improve in the knowledge and expression of our own tongue than by attending to the rules of French composition.

APPENDIX

A CHRISTMAS CHARADE, 1862.

THIS was written for a large party of children who were passing their Christmas at Pynes, and who acted the little play January 1863. The performers were not limited as to numbers, as the bridal scene admitted all too young or indolent to learn a part, in the characters of bridesmaids or pages and chorus singers. Lord Iddesleigh's own eight children, three nieces, and three children of Lord and Lady S——, intimate friends who were staying in the house, all took part in the acting, as did Lord Iddesleigh himself as the Doctor. He wrote the little play from experiencing the difficulty of finding any suitable piece for a party of many young people to act in. In the case of the little Pynes troupe, the ages of the fourteen juvenile performers varied from a boy of five to one of seventeen.

"UT PUERIS PLACEAS."

My first its doors wide open throws
To all, save her who takes my second;
Of human bliss she little knows,
As 'twere beneath my third held close:
Would that her vows my whole were reckoned!

OVERTURE.

SCENE I.

The outside of a Country Inn, with signboard, on which the sign is a Rug.

Enter LANDLORD.

LANDLORD.

Since all that owns
The name of Jones,
From Anglesea to Dover,
May freely claim
The Herbert name,
In spite of Lord Llanover,

Now I, John Bug,
Late of the "Rug,"
Finding my name untoward,
Advise you all,
Both great and small,
I'll dub me Norfolk Howard.

And this my snug
Old inn, the "Rug,"
Where long I've lived in peace,
With me shall rise
Before your eyes,
And be the "Golden Fleece."

[*Takes down the Rug and hangs up the Fleece.*

Enter LOVEL.

LOVEL.

Benighted, wearied, famished, and bemired,
Wet through, half frozen, hungry, cold, and tired.
Angry and sulky, cross and discontented,
Oh, how I wish that railways were invented!
My horse has fallen lame, and in his knee
A blackiethorn as long as this you'll see:
Leave him behind,—I won't; go on,—he can't.
My case is hard, as every one will grant.
Was ever such a poor unlucky fellow?
Look, if it please you, at my new umbrella!
[*Displays a torn and broken one.*
What's this? An inn! Ye blessèd gods, and upper
Powers! I shall get a bed, a fire, and supper.
Here Landlord, Waiter, Cha'am-maid, Ostler, Boots,
Bring beef, hay, brandy, warming-pan, and oats!

Enter LANDLORD, WAITER, CHAMBERMAID, *and* OSTLER, *hurrying.*

LANDLORD.

Yes, sir!

WAITER.

Yes, sir!

CHAMBERMAID.

Yes, sir!

OSTLER.

Yes, sir!

LANDLADY.

As you seem in some distress, sir,
Though we've guests in every bedroom,

White room, pink room, blue room, red room,
And can scarcely find a niche in
Garret, attic, hall, or kitchen,
You shall have a place to pitch in;
And for supper, fish, fowl, flesh,
Herrings red, or herrings fresh,—

LANDLORD.

Bass's Ale or Gladstone's claret,—

LANDLADY.

Soup of onion, pèa, or carrot,—

LANDLORD.

Whisky, rum, or cherry brandy,—

LANDLADY.

Conserve of figs and sugar-candy,—

LANDLORD.

Home-brewed beer, all malt and hops,—

LANDLADY.

Beef-steaks, veal-cutlets, mutton-chops,—

LANDLORD.

Then of punch a steaming bowl,—

LANDLADY.

Salmon, mackerel, whiting, sole;
Anything you please to wish up,
We will tell the cook to dish up.

LOVEL.

On my feet I seem to fall.
Take my horse then to his stall:

Draw my wet boots off my legs,
And for supper send some eggs
Poached, with bacon fried in slices;
Some claret, not at tariff prices;
Minced collops and a woodcock roast,
And a nice anchovy toast;
A dozen oysters in the shell,
A nice plump capon larded well;—
That will do, I make no question,
Heavy meals give indigestion.
For dessert, just bring me here a
Bottle of your old Madeira. [*Exit* LOVEL.

Enter GINEVRA *and her maid* ROSE *in riding-habits.*

GINEVRA [*to the* OSTLER].

Be kind enough to tell me, if you can,
How far it is to Dunstable, good man.

OSTLER.

Eleven miles.

GINEVRA.

Eleven! did you ever?

ROSE.

No, ma'am, I never did, ma'am—never, never!

GINEVRA.

Why, really, Rose, we're in a pretty fix!
When first we started we were told 'twas six;
At the first turnpike they made out 'twas seven;
The next said eight, then nine, and now eleven.
And still the further on our road we go,
The longer does our journey seem to grow.
So if this last intelligence is right,
'Tis plain we shan't reach Dunstable to-night.

Then let us here at this good inn alight:
I see the kitchen fire is blazing bright;
Supper is getting ready, welcome sight!
And we no longer with the storm will fight,
But make us merry here with all our might.

LANDLADY.

It grieves me, madam, such fair hopes to blight;
But here's no room at all. We're packed so tight,
I fear you'll have to make a longer flight.

GINEVRA.

Can't we some supper have?

LANDLADY.

No, not a bite;
It's all bespoke.

GINEVRA.

Ah me! oh luckless wight!
Oh cruel Fortune, oh malicious sprite,
That still in human sufferings dost delight,
And persecutest me with double spite!
Was ever hapless girl in such a plight?
Are you in earnest? or are these but white
Lies that you tell to put me in a fright?
Are you quite sure you're full?

LANDLADY [*with energy*].

Yes, madam; quite.
When folks want beds here, ma'am, folks mostly write.

ROSE.

Oh please, ma'am, don't let's travel any further,—
The roads are full of men that rob and murther.

GINEVRA.

Well, Rose, if we encounter those vile plotters,
And lose our lives by means of the garotters,
I'll take the best revenge that can be had—
I'll haunt that landlady and drive her mad.

[LOVEL *puts his head out of the window.*

LOVEL.

Though to sleep I'm inclined,
My magnanimous mind
With conflicting emotions is harassed;
And I feel, lying here,
Most uncommonly queer,
When I know how that lady's embarrassed.

[*Perceives* GINEVRA.

But what a face
I see! What grace
Resides beneath that habit!
Shall she stand there
And I lie here
Close burrowing like a rabbit?

No! I'll resign
This room of mine;
This four-post bed I'll give her:
But oh! my heart
'S pierced with a dart
Fresh drawn from Cupid's quiver.

GINEVRA.

Oh courteous, gallant, gentle stranger,
Up there aloft that sits,
See here a helpless maid, whom danger
Frightens beside her wits!

My eyes are weary with long watching,
A dreadful cold I feel I'm catching;
I yawn, I stretch, I cough, I sneeze,
I burn, I shake, I faint, I freeze—
My eyes grow dim, my ears are humming,
I feel, I know, my end is coming.

LOVEL.

Fair lady, though I'm no magician,
Nor practise as a court physician,
For due reward I'll undertake
A cure of your complaint to make;
Admit me as your faithful lover, I
Will answer for your quick recovery.
Here's my prescription: I resign
This bedroom, which is henceforth thine.
The chambermaid shall warm your bed,
In flannel you shall wrap your head;
Jump quickly in, and do not dawdle,
Then take a cup of good hot caudle.
To-morrow, when you quit your bedding,
We'll make arrangements for our wedding.

[*Curtain falls.*

SCENE II.

Interior of the BRIDE'S *boudoir.* BRIDE *seated in centre, with* BRIDESMAIDS, PAGES, *&c., attending on her.*

In this scene the arrangement of the BRIDESMAIDS, PAGES *with flowers, &c., to be attended to.*

Music—Bridal chorus from "Der Freischutz."

FIRST BRIDESMAID.

Sweet the labour love commands,
Light the toil to sisters' hands;

See, our task is ended now;
The curls we've braided on her brow—
With silken robes her form we deck,
With gems adorn her snowy neck,
Now place upon her temples pale
Bridal wreath and bridal veil.

SECOND BRIDESMAID.

Bright the golden lily glows,
Sweet the blush of earliest rose,
Pleasant to the sight, I ween,
The blossom white of myrtle green;
But the gem of all my bower
Is the fragrant orange flower—
That flower that scents the perfumed gale,
Meet chaplet for the bridal veil.

THIRD BRIDESMAID.

The violet hides her modest head
Underneath her leafy bed,
And we love her beauty best
When half concealed and half confest.
So, more to grace the maid we prize,
We shroud her from the bridegroom's eyes;
Soon shall his love o'er all prevail,
His hand shall raise our bridal veil.

[*Curtain falls.*

[*Curtain rises again. Music behind the scenes. The song of the "Mistletoe Bough," with chorus.*

[*Curtain falls.*

SCENE III.

Interior—a gallery, with large oak chest.

GINEVRA.

Oh dear! what fun!
I shan't have done
With laughing for a week;
My sides they ache,
And I so shake,
I've scarcely breath to speak.

At hunt the shoe,
And forfeits too,
We've had full many a freak;
Of blindman's buff,
Hot cockles rough,
And such rude stuff,
We've had enough;
So now for hide-and-seek.

A hiding-place come let me choose,
Where Lovel will not find me;
I know I have no time to lose,
He's following close behind me.
He'll catch me in the corridor
If I attempt to go far;
I'd better hide behind the door,
Or underneath the sofa.

Or stay! look here! this old oak chest
Perhaps of all will do the best.
I see it's open—pray, what's in it?
I'll find that out in half a minute.

[*Raises the lid and pulls out some parchments.*

Parchments at top, and other parchments under;
What can the use of these things be, I wonder?
They're but to light a fire and boil the kettle meant—
Why! only fancy! here's my marriage-settlement.
What! all this writing about my pin-money?
That's fifty pounds a-year,—it's really funny.
I wish they'd given me more, and written less;
There would have been some sense in that, I guess.
Well, anyhow this hiding-place is splendid;
Lovel won't find me till the night is ended.

Ladies and Gentlemen, before I enter
Upon this somewhat perilous adventure,
And shut myself thus boldly in the dark,
I hope you'll let me make one short remark.

Ladies, I've been so anxious to begin a line
Of that which Lovel tells me is my duty,
That just to please him I've left off my crinoline,
Although it hasn't much improved my beauty.
If I had kept my ordinary dress on,
I never could have crept into this chest:
Should Lovel lose me, he'll be taught a lesson,
That ladies manage their own wardrobes best.

If what I'm doing turns out inexpedient,
'Twill show what comes of being too obedient;
And if it leads to any great disaster,
The true delinquent is my lord and master.
Before I go, I draw this homely moral,
With which I hope the gentlemen won't quarrel—
A husband never ought to give commands,
Except in matters which he understands.

[*Gets in; shuts down lid; a snap is heard, then a faint scream.*

Enter LOVEL *and* COMPANY.

LOVEL.

It's very odd—unless perhaps she's here.

[*Tries the box.*

No, this is locked; of course she can't be there.
Come, search once more; look well up, down, and round.
I'm getting half afraid she can't be found.

SCENE IV.

Interior of a sick chamber.

Music plays "Ah! che la Morte."

LOVEL *in dressing-gown, nightcap, and slippers.* NURSE *with porringer and spoon. The oak chest in the background.*

NURSE.

Come, take a little, there's a good old soul;
'Twill do you good, you know,—the doctor said so:
Now don't begin, dear heart, your eyes to roll,
And shake about your poor old silly head so.

[*Turns to the audience.*

Poor gentleman! no matter what he hears,
He hasn't spoke a word for twenty years.
They say his wife, the very day they married,
Was up the chimney by the witches carried;
And ever since he found that she was flown,
The cheerfull'st thing he's done has been to groan.
It's been a famous time for all the doctors,
Though dull enough for us to live with locked doors,
And never see a soul our lives to vary,
Except the surgeon and the apothecary.
Look! here's a bundle of their vile prescriptions:
They've given him pills and draughts of all descriptions;

They've leeched him, cupped him, blistered him, and bled him,
Fomented, poulticed, purged him, starved him, fed him.
He's had a mesmerist, a homœopathist,
A galvaniser, and an old hydropathist;
Each thinks the other's treatment makes him worse,
But all agree in bleeding of his purse.

Enter PAGE.

Please, ma'am, there's a gent below
Wants to see my master—
Says he thinks that he can show
A cure for his disaster.

NURSE.

Well, show him up; in quacks I've no belief,
But still a bit of talk's a great relief.

Enter DOCTOR.

Madam, I have the honour to salute a
Most grave and worthy personage, I see.
'Twas at the University of Laputa
That I, your humble slave, took my degree;
And from that learned body I'm depute, a
Strange case to study, and to get my fee.

NURSE.

Excuse me, sir, but as your fee you mention,
How much to charge a visit's your intention?

DOCTOR.

Madam, I hold a regular physician errs
In charging like your general practitioners;
There's nothing in this world so mean,—or skinny—
As taking fees below a golden guinea.

And now the first thing that my mind engrosses,
Is of the case to make a diagnosis.
Where is the evil seated?—that's the question;
Is it in head, feet, liver, or digestion?
Now does this hurt you?

[*Hits* LOVEL *over the head with his cane:*
LOVEL *doesn't stir.*
Not a word he said;
It seems there's nought the matter with his head.
How's your poor feet now?

[*Stamps on his toes:* LOVEL *doesn't stir.*
Well, it's very curious;
That sort of thing would make some people furious.
He doesn't seem to care for thumps and knocks,
No more than if I gave them to this box.

[*Hits the oak chest with his stick:* LOVEL *groans.*
Holloa! what's that? that seemed to give him pain;—
That's an odd symptom; let us try again.

[*Hits chest again:* LOVEL *groans.*
Come, there's no doubt, I've put it to the test—
The patient's malady is in the chest.
Give me the key, and let us look inside it.

NURSE.

Sir, you can't open it; I've often tried it.

DOCTOR.

We'll break it open then, my good old gammer:
Boy, go and fetch a chisel and a hammer.

[*Exit* PAGE, *and re-enters with a* CARPENTER *and a basket of tools:* CARPENTER *forces open the box,* LOVEL *groaning at every blow.*

DOCTOR.

So, now, let's see if anything uncommon
Is here inside. Good gracious, there's a woman!

[LOVEL *jumps up, rushes to the box, looks in, cries* "GINEVRA," *and faints away.*

NURSE.

Why, goodness me! why, what a wonder this is!
As sure as I'm alive it's poor young Missis.

PAGE.

Oh please, madam, faster,
Attend to my master,—
I fear he's as dead as a nail.

DOCTOR.

No, no! I've a device,
Which I think in a trice
Will restore him as right as a nail.

NURSE.

The best thing is to lift him up, and on his back to pat till he
Is well enough to drink a drop of this good sal-volatile.

DOCTOR.

Well, I say nay!
The only way
By which we can restore him,
Will be to bring
This poor young thing
To life again before him.

NURSE.

Bring her to life again! You've lost your head, sir;
For twenty years my mistress has been dead, sir.

DOCTOR.

What's twenty years? I fear, my good old lassie,
You've never read the "l'homme à l'oreille cassée."
Now don't you see this lady met her death
By nothing else than losing of her breath?
She's smothered like that wife of old Othello's.
Boy, run down-stairs and fetch a pair of bellows.

[*Exit* PAGE.

She died for want of air, and we must try
By artificial means air to supply.

[*Re-enter* PAGE *with bellows.*

That's right, my boy, we'll make a shift with those:
Now nurse, adjust the nozzle to her nose.

[*Begins to work the bellows. As he proceeds,* LOVEL *is observed to move first one limb, then another.*

All's doing well, she soon will come to life again;
Then, if he chooses, he can have his wife again.

[GINEVRA *sneezes, and* LOVEL *also immediately sneezes. The* DOCTOR, NURSE, PAGE, *and* CARPENTER *cry "Bless you!" and arrange themselves for a tableau. Meanwhile* GINEVRA *gets out of the box;* LOVEL *rises;* GINEVRA *and he advance.*

GINEVRA.

Ladies and Gentlemen, you here may view
What twenty years will bring a husband to,
Unless his wife's at hand to soothe his cares,
And, as she sees them, pluck out his grey hairs.
But I'll not moralise, lest you be bored:
Our scenes are ended,—please to guess the Word.

AUDIENCE.

As the cot *in* the *vale* 'mid the forest lies *hid*,
So with fancies o'ergrown lies your word "*invalid*."

CANDIDATE.

THIS Charade was written to amuse a large party of Lord Iddesleigh's family and friends in January 1874, who were staying at Pynes just before the dissolution of Parliament by Mr Gladstone's Government, and when the country was beginning to prepare for a general election. There are in it many allusions to local politics. The character of the Practical Hatter was taken by Lord Iddesleigh himself, and the other characters by his children and guests.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Mr TITMOUSE, The Candidate.
Mr HARRIS, The Practical Hatter.
A Blind Beggar.
LADY BETTY TITMOUSE.
MARIETTA.

SCENE I.—CANDIDATE.

A Drawing-Room.

Enter LADY BETTY *and* MARIETTA.

LADY BETTY.

How fares my friend, my blooming Marietta?

MARIETTA.

Pray call me Mary, dear, I like it better:
Indeed I never felt so truly jolly
As when at school you used to call me Polly.

LADY BETTY.

Ah, Pretty Poll! you know you were a pet.

MARIETTA.

Yes; and we used to call you Bouncing Bet.

LADY BETTY.

Ah me! You were a set of vulgar girls.

MARIETTA.

Daughters of dukes, dear—or, at least, of earls.

LADY BETTY.

Well, all those happy days are gone and past,
And life's bright cheerful stream is ebbing fast.
Envious old Time, with his insatiate tooth,
Is biting mighty mouthfuls from our youth.
Say, have my features suffered from his touch?

MARIETTA.

Oh! you've gone off, dear, I can't say how much.

LADY BETTY.

They say my eyes are still as bright as ever.

MARIETTA.

Oh yes; they never were bright—never, never!

LADY BETTY.

My colours are the lily and the rose.

MARIETTA.

Yes—white your cheeks, and blushing red your nose.

LADY BETTY.

Poets write verses to my raven hair.

MARIETTA.

They're fond of fictions; but the plaits you wear
Are really excellent; I wish you'd tell
Which is the shop where such good work they sell.
Forgive my freedom, dear; you know I'm frank.

LADY BETTY.

And scarcely mindful, madam, of my rank.

MARIETTA.

You used to think so little of your Duchy,
But since you married you're becoming touchy.
A *mésalliance.*

LADY BETTY.

Mary, hold your tongue:
You're growing pert.

[*Exit.*

MARIETTA.

I see I am not wrong.
Indeed it must be owned in common charity,
She has some right to quarrel with vulgarity.

Enter TITMOUSE.

TITMOUSE.

Come, now, I think I've done the Artful Dodger,—
I've bet him fifteen hundred on Sir Roger.
I raythor think I've let the Dodger in,—
Kenealy tells me he is sure to win;

He swears the jury's grand although it's petty:
I've laid a bet,—now where is Lady Betty?

MARIETTA.

Gone to lie down; she is not very well,—
It made her sick to hear you ring the bell.

TITMOUSE.

Not well! John, George, James, Thomas, call the doctor.

MARIETTA.

No need of him! 'Tis you yourself has shocked her.
Call in the best physicians of the nation,
What they'll prescribe will be a separation.

TITMOUSE.

My eyes and blazes! this is coming funny;
Why haven't I give her no end of money?
Lor'! you should see what she's laid out in gowns—
She's spent a matter of a thousand pounds.
She sweeps 'em up, lace, satin, velvet, silk,
Just as a pig sucks up a trough of milk.
Look! here's her bill for stays, she calls 'em corsets,
Give you my word 'twould buy a pair of horses.
She made me give a guinea for a stocking.

MARIETTA.

Pray, stop, you really are becoming shocking.

TITMOUSE.

Beg pardon, ma'am, but since I went a-courtin',
It really have a cost me half my fortin'.

MARIETTA.

I daresay, sir, that may be very true:
She wanted, sir, your fortune, and not you.

TITMOUSE.

Why didn't she want me? I'd like to know.

MARIETTA.

She thought you—don't be angry—rather low.
She couldn't bear those men you called "good fellars";
And said you went to vulgar cider-cellars.

TITMOUSE.

I've given 'em up, I have, I'll take my oath,—
I've given up cider and the cellar both:
I've taken now to smoking in the attic.

MARIETTA.

I don't think even that's aristocratic.
Well, if you ever wish to please your wife,
I'd have you wholly change your way of life.
Take my advice as kindly as 'tis meant;
Leave off the odious manners of a "gent."
Do something practical, and like a man,
And be a gentleman;—that's if you can.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—"HAT."

Door of the Practical Hatter's shop. HARRIS *the Practical Hatter seated outside.*

HARRIS [*sings*].

What will the next of my customers order?
What will the hat that he chooses be?
Will he come from France or from over the Border?
I know not now, but I soon shall see.
He may be tall, or he may be stumpy,
He may be thin, or he may be fat,

Whether his head be smooth or bumpy,
I warrant 'twill fit him, my hat, my hat.

If my lady would know the truth of the matter,
To see which the chaff is, and which is the corn,
Let her come and learn of the Practical Hatter,
I'll teach her to know a true gentleman born.
For there's one blow you may break his heart with,—
He will stand a good deal, but he won't stand that;
His money and life he is ready to part with,
But he'll cling to *thee* ever, my hat, my hat.

Enter TITMOUSE *gorgeously apparelled—*
"All armed save his head full royally."

TITMOUSE.

I want a tile uncommonly superior.

HARRIS.

I'll find one for you in a moment; here y' are.
I'll try it on, if you'll allow me.

TITMOUSE.

What! Is that the thing you call a chimney-pot?
I can't wear that—you know I can't; why, blow it!
Now coals have riz, my lady won't allow it.

HARRIS.

Well, perhaps from my stock you will make your selection,
I think I've a tidyish sort of collection.
As a Yankee once said, and my counter he spat on,—
"Well, stranger! I reckon this shop is 'Manhattan.'"
What he liked was, to see how I came the historical,
Though I don't altogether neglect allegorical.
Here's a cap which, the Greeks say, swift Mercury wore,
When he drove the sad ghosts o'er to Proserpine's shore:

I fancy they thought him not wholly seraphical—
But my hats are, moreover, a bit geographical.
Here's a map which I've made to illustrate the matter, as
For instance, here's Hatfield, and there is Cape Hatteras.
Here's an article, now, quite a jewel of fashion,—
'Tis like that which, I've heard, put Queen Bess in a passion.
What's that Chancellor's name that they say sometimes kissed
of her?
You know whom I'm meaning, the learned Sir Christopher;
He'd a beaver, they say, which was wholly unique,
And he wore it all day, seven days in the week,
Wherever he stood, or whatever he sat on,—
And that's why they called him Sir Christopher Hatton.

TITMOUSE.

I used to live in Hatton Gardens, I did.

HARRIS.

The taste in hats there is a thought misguided.

TITMOUSE.

Here, I'll take that thing,—no, not this but that, oh!

HARRIS.

Why, that's the mitre, sir, of Bishop Hatto.
You've heard, no doubt, the story of the Bishop;
He was the priest the rats once chose to dish up.
They ate his flesh, his bones, his dog, his cat;
But, see! they never dared to touch his hat.
Oh no! not they. I'd just like to have seed 'em,
The hat's the core of (Civil-Religious) Freedom.
Look! here's the hat that Gessler made men bow to,
Which stout old William Tell, he knew not how to,—
It is the key-stone of the Constitution.

You've heard about the great French Revolution,
And how the Sans-culottes, bloodthirsty wretches,
Upset the throne, by leaving off their breeches.
But what would happen would be worse than that,
If Great John Bull should once leave off his hat.

Enter a BLIND BEGGAR *and his dog.*

BLIND BEGGAR.

Pity my sorrows and my sad condition,—

TITMOUSE.

Shut up! I hate, of all things, a petition.

BLIND BEGGAR.

Petition's bad, but competition's worse:
That competition is the army's curse.
I've seen some service. Prythee, don't be scoffy, sir,
Once on a time I was a smart young officer.
I thought to get promotion, but, behold!
Purchase was smashed, and we poor soldiers sold.
To purchase anything we were not able,—
I don't think they'd have let us buy a table.
So when I found my money was no use,
I spent it all, and then went to the deuce.
I hope your honour will bestow a copper.

TITMOUSE.

To give to beggars is, I'm told, improper.
I go for Charity Organisation.

BLIND BEGGAR.

Those organ-grinders are my ruination,—
They gets a shilling where I gets a penny,
And yet my dog can howl as well as any.

I'd rather feel his teeth upon my leg,
Than hear the noises they make when they beg.

TITMOUSE.

Well, here's some halfpence,—catch 'em in your hat.

[TITMOUSE, *going, throws some halfpence into the* BEGGAR'S *hat, the crown of which comes out, and the halfpence fall to the ground.* TITMOUSE *picks them up, puts them in his pocket, and runs off laughing.*

BLIND BEGGAR.

Thank you for nothing, you owdacious flat.

Song.

The hat that once on Epsom Down
Adorned a Guardsman's head,
Now useless hangs without a crown,
And all its nap is fled.
No more it keeps out rain or dew,
No better than a sieve;
And sometimes gents drop coppers through,
To show that still they give.

SCENE III.—CANDIDATE.

Still at the door of the HATTER'S *shop, which is now decorated with yellow festoons.*

THE PRACTICAL HATTER, *in yellow rosettes, &c., sings—*

Oh! Tommy dear, and did you hear,
The like was never found,
The bluebells and forget-me-nots
Are sprouting up all round.

And all along the High Street, dear,
And down the Fore Street, too,
Are thousands of the working men
All wearing of the blue.

I met with Mr Latimer,
He took me by the hand;
Says he, "How's poor old Exeter?
And how does she stand?"
"She's the most distressful city, sir,
That ever I went through,
For all the men and women there
Are wearing of the blue."

Oh! if that colour I must wear,
'Twill cause me many an ache,
For 'twill remind me of the pills
The doctor made me take.
We'll tear the bluebell from their cap,
And throw it in the mud,
And, never fear, we'll keep it there,
Or stain it with our blood.

Oh! could we find a candidate
That's of the proper stuff,
We'd haul their blue flag down again,
And hoist our noble buff.
And when he goes to Parliament,
I'll tell you what he'll do,—
He'll make a law against the sky
For wearing of the blue.

[*Enter* TITMOUSE, *who joins in the Chorus.*

He'll } make a law against the sky,
I'll }
For wearing of the blue.

HATTER.

Well, sir! so you're our candidate, I guess.

TITMOUSE.

I've come to ask you about my address.
I'll read it out: Ladies and Gentlemen——

HATTER.

Oh! that won't do; pray, now, begin again,
And say, "Electors free and independent."

TITMOUSE.

Here's the beginning and the end on't:
I'm the man to cut up rough;
I'm the man to hoist the buff;
I'm the man to hoist the yellow;
I'm a rattling, jolly fellow;
I'm the man at odds or evens
You must send up to St Stephen's.

HATTER.

That's very good; but you should give opinions
On all that's stirring in the Queen's dominions.

TITMOUSE.

I haven't got any.

HATTER.

I daresay not,
But that won't hinder you a single jot.
Here come the ladies,—they'll suggest some *ideas*.
[*Enter* LADY BETTY *and* MARIETTA.

TITMOUSE.

I'm sure I'm very glad to see you, *my* dears.
What should I say in my address, Miss, please?

MARIETTA.

You should say something of the Ashantees.

LADY BETTY.

Mary, I fear your information's scanty,—
You ought to call that golden land, *Ashan*tee.

HATTER.

Don't let him talk about a golden tribe, or he
Is sure to be petitioned at for bribery.
But say, what think you of the income-tax?

TITMOUSE.

Why, that I'd keep my counsel close as wax.
The best plan is to swear you haven't any,
And then they cannot make you pay a penny.

LADY BETTY.

Come, Mary, let us put him up a husting,
And make him speak.

TITMOUSE.

O Lor'! I feel like busting.
[*They put up the hustings.*

MARIETTA.

He'll want an audience to speak to, won't he?

HATTER.

Of course; I'll go and get one.

TITMOUSE.

Don't ye, don't ye:
Upon my word, I do not care about one,—
Indeed, I think I'd rather speak without one.

MARIETTA *to* LADY BETTY.

I'll get up one crowd, if you'll get another.

LADY BETTY.

Oh! that I will, dear.

TITMOUSE.

Bother! bother! bother!

LADY BETTY.

I'll get a yellow crowd, and you,
Mary dear, shall get a blue.

[*The ladies go out, and return on opposite sides, bringing in two crowds:* TITMOUSE *mounts the hustings, and the* HATTER *stands behind him.*

TITMOUSE.

Good ladies all, and gentlemen, pray don't be very critical.
I used to call my soul my own; now, not a tiny bit I call.
They get me up in buff, and round my neck a yellow wrapper tie,
But it only means that I've become a married woman's property.
Out of my senses I am drove, because she's turned sensational;
Her tyranny I can't describe,—it's undenominational:
Sometimes she'll storm about a gown, and sometimes for a muff rage,
And sometimes she'll come down and say, she wants the women suffrage.
And now she's taken up a whim, the oddest of the century,
That all smart things in town are kept for members parliamentary.
So, if you ask me why I'm here? this only I can say, it is

In order that my lady may enjoy the London gaieties.
You soon will make me your M.P., I'll hazard that prediction,
And when I am so, you will find I'm open to conviction.
One point there is on which my mind entirely up-made is,
And that is, that I will put down those very learned ladies.
I'll make them stick to needlework, and mind their cradle-rockings,
And, for that purpose, I'll propose a tax upon blue-stockings.
And one thing more there is to which I've given much reflection,
It is that stupid Act they call "The Little Birds' Protection."
What I'll protect are gooseberries and nectarines and peaches;
I can't exactly say how far that foolish schedule reaches,
For many names I cannot find in lexicons or grammars,
But this at least I'm clear upon, I'll kill up yellow-hammers.
And now you've heard my sentiment, my colour you shall choose it,
And whatsoever it may be, you'll find I won't refuse it.

Song.

What colour shall he wear? says the man with the vote;
What colour shall he wear? says the man with the vote:
Shall we deck him with the buff?

Chorus. No, he isn't man enough,
And he talks such horrid stuff,
Says the man with the vote.

What colour shall we choose? says the man with the vote;
What colour shall we choose? says the man with the vote:
Shall we trust him with the blue?

Chorus. No, that would never do,
For he never would be true,
Says the man with the vote.

Now, what colour can it be? says the man with the vote;
Now, what colour can it be? says the man with the vote.

Chorus. What colour can we mean
But a very verdant green?
That's the colour shall be seen,
Says the man with the vote.

TABLEAU.

[*Curtain.*

SIBYL'S CAVE.

WRITTEN by Sir Stafford Northcote, August 1869, at the desire of Lady S. Fortescue, who wished for a legend of Castle Hill and Sibyl's Cave and brook—a cavern with a stream issuing from it of great natural beauty, in the woods that lie around the house. A large party, among whom was the American Minister, had been much struck with the charms of the spot and its romantic name, and felt that, combined, they were subjects that ought to inspire a ballad.

THE Pixies dance on Oxford Down;
On Castle Field they form a ring;
And when the yew-trees darkly frown,
He holds his Court, the Pixy king.

In vain with Lenten roses crowned,
With gilticups and violets dear,
The elvish maidens tread the round;
The Pixy king is sad of cheer.

"The time is come," he sighed, and said,
"The day, the fatal hour, is come,
When we must quit this well-loved glade,
Must leave these hills, the Pixies' home.

"A human foot our path has trod,
Has scaled our heights, has crossed our dell;
And human hands have turned our sod,
And human lips have touched our well.

"Soon must these trees, our leafy screen,
Before the woodman's axe give way;
The ruthless plough deface the scene
Of bygone pomp and revels gay.

"Haste, let us quit this hallowed place,
Ere yet the ruin be complete;
Fly the profane, the hated race,
And seek from man a sure retreat.

"Within yon hill's o'erhanging side,
That o'er our brooklet casts its shade,
Are wondrous mansions, halls of pride,
And stately bowers by Pixies made.

"The walls with burnished gold are red,
The windows light with emerald sheen;
With orient pearls the floors are spread,
And turquoise blue and emerald green.

"There thou, my Sibyl, daughter dear,
Shalt crown my cup, shalt lead the dance
Intruding man thou shalt not fear—
Safe shalt thou dwell from human glance.'

"Nay! father, nay! I cannot leave
This bright, this fair, this happy earth,
To live within a sunless cave;
I have no heart for sunless mirth.

"I love the hills, I love the flood,
I love the meads with flowerets gay;
I love the darkling Easter wood,
I love the merry tinkling Bray.

"I love to see the great red-deer,
I love the salmon in the pool,
The blackcock's cry at morn to hear,
The beetle's hum at evening cool.

"Mine rather be the mortals' fate,
'Mid scenes like these a life to spend,
Than in those halls of dreary state
To pine for aye, and hope no end."

More had she said, but feared to meet
Her sire's dark brow of gathering gloom.
He cast the sceptre at his feet;
He spoke the awful Pixy doom.

"Peace, senseless maid! thy daring tongue
Hath broke the law that Pixies own;
Thine own rash words the knell have rung,
That drives thee from thy father's throne.

"Be thine to share the mortals' lot,—
Their cares, their toils, their griefs to know:
The land of fairies knows thee not;
Hence from my presence, *mortal*, go!"

It was a knight of noble mien
Came riding down the Castle Field;
His lance was strong, his sword was keen,
For crest he bore a stainless shield.

Along the quiet brooklet's side
He passed until he reached a spot,
Where 'mid the hazels he espied
The entrance to a rustic grot.

And there a form he could discern,
Which, startled by his horse's tread,
Sprang up and plunged among the fern,
The fern high waving o'er his head.

He sprang to earth, he leaped the brook,
He could not choose but feel the charm;
Through fern and hazel-bush he broke,—
He holds the wanderer in his arm.

And there the maiden stood confest,
The maid that broke the Pixies' law;
It was the brightest, merriest, best,
And dearest face he ever saw.

Such life was in her open brow,
Such life was in her bright black eye;
She smiled, I cannot tell you how;
He loved, I well could tell you why.

Needs not to tell what words he said,
Nor how he wooed, nor how he sighed;
Enough, I say, that well he sped,
And Sibyl is the Strong Man's bride.

Ah! blest indeed that Strong Man's lot,
And happy is the Strong Man's life;
Well might he love the rustic grot
Where first he found his Pixy wife.

He never asked if face more fair
In courtly halls perchance were seen;
To him the brightest beauty there
Was dim beside his Fairy Queen.

There was not one among them all
With step so free, so true, so light;
There was not one among them all
With glance so arch, so kind, so bright.

It seemed she trod the woodland grove
As if the world once more were young;
Each living creature claimed her love,
And round her every motion hung.

The deer would court her fond caress,
The leverets wanton round her feet,
The birds their liveliest songs address,
The flowers their odours breathe more sweet.

She had her share of human mirth,
She had her share of human grief;
She felt the woes that haunt the earth,
She found the tears that bring relief.

Full well her noble lord she loved,
Full well she loved her children dear;
Yet as amidst them all she moved,
There clung to her a boding fear.

And sometimes would she haste away,
Drawn by what force she could not tell,
And lie the livelong summer's day
Beside the cave within the dell.

And from within its dark recess
Unearthly sounds would to her come:
She knew, though none but she could guess,
That faint wild horn, that muffled drum.

'Twas not so much her ear that caught
The mystic sounds that rolled along;
It was her beating heart that taught
The burden of that awful song:

"Fallen daughter, hear our spell;
Thine it is on earth to dwell,—
Shouldst thou touch the Pixie's water,
Once more we claim the Pixie's daughter."

One summer evening forth she strayed,—
It was the night of fair St John;
The moonbeams on the streamlet played,
And brightly on the hill they shone.

At once from out the inmost hill
Strange music to her ear is borne,
And ringing laughter clear and shrill,
And hark! the echoing Pixy horn.

And see! they come, a merry band,
Once more their native haunts to view,
Once more to dance on Pixy's land,
Once more to taste the Pixy's dew.

"Come sister, come!" they sudden call,
"Too long thou loiterest from thy home;
Thy seat stands empty in our hall,
Thy couch is spread; come, sister, come!"

She starts, she flies; the troop pursue.
Haste Sibyl, haste, or all is lost!
How swift her flight, her step how true!
The bank is reached, the stream is crossed.

Alas! what means that piercing scream?
The faithless stepping-stone gave way.
Her foot hath touched the Pixies' stream;
They seize, they bear her far away.

But where into the brook she fell,
Beneath the greenwood's darkling shade,
With rough stones more than I can tell
A rustic bridge the Strong Man made.

And there he ever would abide,
Still gazing down into the wave;
Or listening for his Pixy bride
Within the vault of Sibyl's cave.

Long years have passed, and men forgot
The story of that once-loved place;
And yet the hall of Sibyl's grot
Is still the home of Sibyl's race.

I've heard their laughter in the wood,
I've seen their gambols in the plain,
And thought that in the merry brood
I still could trace the Pixy strain.

And when the queen of all the band,
Beside the stream, one summer's day,
Upon me laid that strange command,
And bid me sing lost Sybil's lay,—

It seemed as though a wizard arm
  Rolled back for me the mist of time;
'Twas Sibyl's self that spoke the charm,
  'Twas Sibyl's self inspired the rhyme.

L'ENVOI.

Fair ladies, since I know you look
  For something sage to point my stave,—
Don't wet your feet in Pixie's brook,
  Lest you be lost in Sibyl's cave.

CLERK OF OXENFORDE.

THIS ballad was found among some old papers, and written apparently while Sir Stafford was at Oxford. It was scribbled in pencil, and hardly decipherable, but Sir Stafford has sometimes mentioned the legend. Huber, in his 'English Universities,' vol. i. p. 193, gives it thus: "Each separate College not only has its history but once had its traditions—of which, however, the overwisdom of modern times has scarcely left us one. Among the best was certainly that concerning a scholar of Queen's College, Oxford, who, being attacked during a solitary walk by a wild boar, thrust his Aristotle down the animal's throat, and returned home in triumph with the head. For this reason the boar's head played a prominent part in the Christmas festivities at this College, and even in Wood's time continued to be greeted with the following verses:—

'The boar's head in hand bear I,
Bedecked with bays and rosemary;
And I pray you, masters, merry be,
Quot quot estis in convivio.
Caput apri refero
Reddens laudes Domino.

The boar's head, as I understand,
Is the bravest dish in the land;
Being thus bedecked with gay garland
Let us servire convivio.
Caput apri, &c.

Our steward has provided this,
In honour of the king of bliss
Which on this day to be served is
In Reginensi Atrio.
Caput apri, &c.'"

1.

It was at ancient Oxenforde,
In good King Alfred's time,
There walked a youth on Headington
About the morning prime.

2.

Upon his seemly head a cap
Close fitted to his crown;
And all about him in fair wise
There hung an ample gown.

3.

For he was not a Commoner,
As many others are,
But he was a wight of learned fame,
And a mighty great scholàr.

4.

And in his hand a book he bore,
Wherein he walking read;
It was a mighty tome, I wis,
Y-bound in white and red.

5.

It was to weet Dan Aristote,
In a fair Grecian text;
The more the scholar read therein,
The more he was perplext.

6.

He lookèd up, he lookèd round,
The meaning for to find,
And there he was 'ware of a great wild boar
Came charging him behind.

7.

Like to that beast of Eurymanthe
Whom great Alcides slew,
Or that which Meleager quelled,
This monster was to view.

8.

Like to a red hot-coal of fire
So blazed his furious eye,
And from his grinding tusks about
The snow-white foam did fly.

9.

Now Heaven thee help, thou good scholàr,
No mortal aid is nigh;
Thou canst not hope by flight to 'scape,
He cometh so furiously.

10.

Then he devised a goodly gest,
As e'er in tale was writ;
Who cannot win by force, he said,
He needs must win by wit.

11.

His back against a sturdy tree
Right manfully he placed,
And with the book in his right hand
The mighty boar he faced.

12.

Adown the monster's gaping throat
That volume then he thrust;
Quoth he, "This book doth puzzle me,—
It shall puzzle thee, I trust."

13.

"This book," said he, "hath choked me,—
It shall choke thee too, I ween;
But an if thou swallow it, thou shalt
In évil case be seen."

14.

As when a jolly candidate
Thinks in the schools to pass,
So came the boar right merrily
Bounding along the grass.

15.

As when the stern examiner
That candidate doth floor,
So, overthrown by that good book,
Fell down the angry boar.

16.

Thrice he essayed to cast it up,
And thrice to gulp it down;
Then at the last his powerful breath
Did yield in mortal swoon.

17.

"Now thanks, now thanks, Don Aristote,"
The scholar 'gan to say;
"I ween the best turn e'er thou didst
Thou hast done to me this day."

18.

Now when as news to Oxford came
That this great boar was slain,
Came trooping forth to see that sight
A long and goodly train.

19.

First came the yeomen bedells,
A fair and stalwart band;
Each one with comely countenance,
Each one with mace in hand.

20.

Our honoured Lord the Chancellor,
A noble fere was he;
And with him his Vice-Chancellor,
In robe full gay to see.

21.

The doctors and the proctors
Behind them were addrest;
And Heads of Halls and Colleges,
Arrayed in scarlet vest.

22.

The noblemen they followed,
In robes full richly stuffed;
Each bore a velvet cap on head,
And each a golden tuft.

23.

The Gentles and the Commoners
Behind did throng and urge;
Some were in gowns of silk y-clad,
And some in gowns of serge.

24.

Before the band, and eke behind,
And in the midst did goe
A troop of youngling choristers,
In robes as white as snow.

25.

Adown the seemly High Street, then,
In order did they goe,
And came where now the bridge is built,
That was a ferry tho'.

26.

And when the river they had crossed,
Up Headington they wound,
And came whereas the monstrous boar
Lay dead upon the ground.

27.

Between his jaws the book was tight,
A sight most strange to see;
"In faith," quoth then the Chancellor,
"I think 'twould have choked me."

28.

With that he bade the bedells stout
Upraise the mighty beast,
Who, though full hard the labour was,
Obeyed their lord's behest.

29.

And first his head was cutted off,
And raisèd up on high,
Which that same scholar bravely bore
Before the company.

30.

And still the lusty choristers,
Behind him and before,
Did sing and chaunt his worthy praise,
Who slew the great wild boar.

31.

Then came they back to Oxenforde
In fair array, I guesse,
And all around to see that sight
The townsmen they did presse.

32.

And when they were to dinner sett
In midst of spacious hall,
That scholar brought the wild-boar head
To the table for them all.

33.

And still, when merrie Christmas comes,
All in his season due,
Then doe the Dons of Oxenforde,
That festivall renew.

34.

When as the holly decks the hall,
And eke the mistletoe,
And in the chimney blazing bright
The ashen faggots glow,—

35.

Then doth a scholar deck the board
With a boar's head garnisht brave;
And as he setteth it adown,
Doth chaunt this goodly stave:—

36.

"Lordings, your feast is fairly spread,
Now give ye thanks therefore;
And in your mirthe remember him
Who slew the great wild boar."

LINES

ON THE

DUKE OF WELLINGTON'S STATUE.

THESE lines were written by Lord Iddesleigh when he was reading for the Bar in London, after leaving Oxford, which he did in 1839. When he wrote them, the statue of the great Duke of Wellington on the arch at Hyde Park Corner had recently been put up, and was the subject of much adverse criticism. After its removal in 1886, Lord Iddesleigh remarked to his wife one day, while walking near the spot, "One of the earliest things I remember, after coming to London to settle in chambers, was writing some verses about that statue. I wonder where they are."

THE Duke, whom always we've allowed
To be the idol of the crowd
(Except when this or t'other sin does
Provoke their stones to break his windows),
Has lately, in his green old age,
Become, they say, so much the rage—
So lithographed, engraved, and painted,
Berhymed, bepraised, and almost sainted;
In all his rides, in all his walks,
Whene'er he eats, whene'er he talks—

At home, in church, at board, in bed,
So well described from heel to head;
At balls and concerts, plays and ballets,
Gaped at by heroes and their valets—
In royal court, in humblest room,
By Whigs, by Tories, and by Brougham;
In short, so much the rage in town,
The gods resolved to take him down.

'Twas at the great Olympian Court
(Which, by the way, was rather short;
For Venus, though she owned 'twas silly,
Could never keep from Piccadilly;
And Mars from time to time must look
How all went on about the Duke;
Pallas and Hermes once a-week
Went to the Lords' to hear him speak;
And Fame, since first his Grace she knew,
Had always had enough to do);—
'Twas, as we said, at Jove's great levee
The gods discussed the subject heavy.
Great Jove himself, a despot true,
Briefly commenced, "This will not do:
Devise some remedy who can,
Our thunder else shall strike the man."
The words were somewhat of the sternest,
But all perceived they were in earnest,
And that if something were not done,
The game was up with Wellington.

Compassion moved each noble breast,
The goddesses were most distressed;
A Duke, so stout of heart and limb,
They could not sure abandon him;
And 'twould be hard if female wit
On some expedient could not hit.

Save him, in short, they will and must,
And many a way thereof discussed,
Yet though ingenious more or less,
Their plans were all without success:
None turned the wrath of Jove away,
And all he granted was delay.
That night, as Juno lonely sate,
Lamenting o'er her hero's fate,
With aching head and bosom sore,
A knock was heard at the outer door.
"Admit the stranger," Juno cried,
And straightway through the portal wide
The stranger came—a goddess she,
But not of first-rate quality;
Full seldom loved, full often feared,
At Court but rarely she appeared;
Shunned by the gods on days of state,
They sought her when they learnt to hate,
For none could crush their enemies
So skilfully as Nemesis.
Her face was singular enough,—
Seen from above, 'twas hard and rough;
But those who saw it from below
Have said more mild it seemed to grow.
With plain address and haughty mien,
She stood before the goddess queen.
Boots not to give their conversation;
This was, in fine, the peroration:
"Great queen, to Vulcan's forge I hie,
To order there this monstrous guy,
And when our sovereign sees the wonder,
You'll find he thinks no more of thunder."
Thus having said, without delay
To Ætna straight she takes her way,

Where Vulcan, swearing like a Turk,
Keeps up the Cyclops to their work.
"Vulcan," she cries, "pray stop those bellows;
Your father, Vulcan, 's growing jealous
Of England's Duke, who seems to be
O'erloaded with prosperity.
The gods are this resolved to do,
To let him down a peg or two,
And make him know that, after all,
Vain are all mortals, great or small.
A mighty statue they decree,
Armed, like Field-Marshals, *cap-à-pie;*
A man above, a horse beneath,
A saddle, bridle, sword, and sheath;
Item, a helmet for the roof,
And over all a waterproof;
The whole as big as you can make it,
And when it's done, to London take it,—
Bear it to Hyde Park Corner straight,
And set it up before his gate,
That so the thought may often strike,
'That's what the people think I'm like.'"

LINES WRITTEN IN HIS SISTER'S ALBUM, 1842.

1.

ERE heathen mythology went out of fashion,
While Jupiter reigned in the good olden times,
His Court at Olympus was seized with a passion,
A terrible passion, for writing of rhymes.

2.

Each god and each goddess, instead of attending
To business, was scribbling a sonnet or ode—
Inventing, composing, reciting, and spending
All day in an absent poetical mood.

3.

Apollo his chariot and horses neglected,
While he lazily warbled sweet strains to the lyre;
And mortals in vain his bright rising expected,
And marvelled where slept the celestial fire.

4.

The warrior Mars lost all fancy for fighting,
Diana forgot the glad joys of the chase;
E'en Bacchus, no longer in liquor delighting,
Wrote comical songs at a wonderful pace.

5.

This put poor old Jove in a terrible taking,—
His kingdom was ruined from bottom to top;
A whole summer's night on his couch he lay waking,
Devising some measure this evil to stop.

6.

Next morn found his godship not very much wiser,—
He hadn't decided at all what to do,
So bethought him of asking some better adviser,
And sent for Minerva, a well-known blue.

7.

Swift Mercury found her at Athens reposing,
And told her of Jupiter's urgent commands;
So she started at once, not a half-minute losing,
With her owl by her side, and her spear in her hand.

8.

"Dear Father!" says she, when she'd briefly bethought her
Of all his perplexity, grief, and distress;
"Thank your stars that you've got such a sharp-sighted daughter,—
I'll stop this here fun in an hour or less."

9.

Here pausing, she thrice gave the earth a hard knock, oh!
Forth started a volume obedient to view;
It was clasped with gold clasps, it was bound in morocco,
And the leaves were all colours, from crimson to blue.

10.

With this she set forth, and the owl he did follow,
To a shady, sequestered, contemplative grove,
And there, sure enough, sate the pensive Apollo,
Inditing some stanzas to Music and Love.

11.

"Dear sir," she began, "I have always admired
Your beautiful poems, so soft, so divine—
Each word so enchanting, each thought so inspired,
A bright, inexhaustible, diamond-mine.

12.

"Might I beg—if it is not too much,—you'll excuse me,
But really your handwriting would be a prize:
Here's my album! You will not, you cannot refuse me
A few lines,"—and she looked with most languishing eyes.

13.

"Good gracious!" cries he, as she spreads out the pages,
"'Pon honour I can't—it's quite out of my way;
I've given up writing these half-dozen ages,—
Your servant, dear madam; I wish you good day."

14.

The next she fell in with, as onward proceeding,
Was Mars, the belligerent hero of fights;
He was rhyming on battles and enemies bleeding
Before the sharp swords of the conquering knights.

15.

"I'm afraid" she commences, "you'll think me quite rude,
But soldiers are always so vastly polite;
I really ask pardon, sir, if I intrude:
Would you deign just a verse in my album to write?"

16.

"By Juno and Jupiter! lightning and thunder!"
Cries he, starting back on the toes of the owl;
"Zounds! ma'am, I'm no poet—you strike me with wonder:
Beg pardon—I hope I've not injured your fowl."

17.

It was strange to behold, wheresoever she bore it,
The album seemed always to act as a charm:
All pretensions to poetry vanished before it,
And the boldest of rhymers fled off in alarm.

18.

Diana set off with her nymphs to the mountain,
And Venus bid harness her best set of doves;
Gay Bacchus threw all his songs into the fountain;
Grave Neptune bid farewell to poems and groves.

19.

Time hath not diminished its magical power,—
The album yet fills poets' hearts with affright,—
'Tis the terror of hopeful young bards to this hour,
And still puts their promising verses to flight.

20.

Who can tell what a tremor comes over the poet
When a lady produces the elegant book?
'Tis quite useless to speak, 'tis sufficient to show it,—
It enchants, it destroys, by its basilisk look.

21.

You must often have seen in a drawing or picture,—
At least, if you haven't, you surely have heard
How that terrible creature, the boa-constrictor,
With a glance of its eye can inveigle a bird.

22.

On a bough of a tree the poor innocent victim
Sits looking and trembling, unable to fly,
Till the venomous reptile securely has picked him
From off his perch, and has doomed him to die.

23.

'Tis thus when the sight of the album amazes
The hapless, devoted, unfortunate bard,
Without chance of escape at its pages he gazes,
And he sees and he mourns on his destiny hard.

24.

Then remember, ye poets, its marvellous virtue;
Since ye cannot avoid it, submit to your fate:
The sooner ye write in't, the less it will hurt you;
And be sure you must write in it sooner or late.

THE END.

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